

Sketch

Safety in law of diminishing return



Matthew Engel

TWO politicians who have lately found themselves controversially mentioned in the public prints were able to return yesterday to the calm, safe and obscure haven of a Monday afternoon in the House of Commons.

barrister in the Matrix Churchill trial? Of course it can't, said Sir Nicholas, don't be absurd. (I paraphrase the orotund phraseology somewhat, but without losing the general sense.)

First night

Verdi upstaged by the Werther

Tom Sutcliffe

Rigoletto and Werther Theatres Royal, Brighton

THOUGH English Touring Opera's Rigoletto is the newcomer for the company's long spring tour, it is Werther — much criticised when first seen last autumn — that is now the more accomplished and interesting of the two shows.

ing of this wonderful Verdi, by Richard Jones and David Parny conducting, will always remain a high spot in the history of the renamed company.

Subsidies to low paid cost taxpayer £2 billion a year

BENEFITS paid to people in work have more than doubled in three years to at least £2.3 billion, writes David Bradie.

employers to declare how many staff make most use of the benefits. A Department of Social Security spokesman said the average hourly pay rate of family credit recipients was about £3.50.

'Naive' owner admits 'mistake' in letting youngsters know where he stored weapons at his home

Alert on pensioner's guns



Peter Preston, a competition marksman and rifle club member, whose guns were stolen

Owen Bowcott

POLITICAL anxiety over gun control was heightened yesterday when it was alleged that a 14-year-old boy arrested in High Wycombe for stealing four rifles and pistols had previously handled the weapons at the home of a local pensioner.

Police were still looking for a .22 pistol last night. As Thames Valley police announced an inquiry into the incident, the Home Office confirmed that the frequency with which firearms owners must renew their permits has recently been relaxed from every three years to every five years.

Harvey Nichols in £80m flotation to fund new branches

'Sloanes' favourite store looks for new horizons in Yorkshire and catering trade

Richard Thomas

HARVEY Nichols, favourite high fashion haunt of London's Sloane set, is floating on the stock exchange to raise funds for a nationwide expansion programme, starting in Yorkshire.

of shares. The owner, Hong Kong-based Dickson Concepts, will retain the controlling stake. New branches are to open, beginning with Leeds this autumn, and there are plans to capitalise on the success of the fifth-floor restaurant in the Knightsbridge store by opening similar establishments elsewhere.

important new projects... and look to the future with confidence. Last year the store made a £5 million profit, after losing money during the recession.

but agreed the store's social cachet would fuel a healthy market among individuals in the near future. The patronage of the Princess of Wales is seen as an important marketing bonus.

born chef enjoying a £2 cup of coffee at the cafe. It is doubtful whether the Harvey Nicks ethos — epitomised by Edwina and Patsy in the BBC's Absolutely Fabulous — will sell in the North.

certain class of people here since we started in 1913," he said. "That's why they pay over the odds. I'm not sure if Yorkshire is ready."

Mandela's 'loveless marriage'

continued from page 1 to meet them and had failed to accord them "proper respect". Mr Trengove told the court Mr Matanzima was in fact only paramount chief of Western Transkei and was "inappropriate" for him to "meddle" in the Mandela relationship.

"The contents of the letter, my lord, were incompatible with a marriage relationship and even if there was a possibility of reconciliation, it confirmed my decision never to reconcile with the defendant"

and you accepted her word. As far as Dr Asvat is concerned, have you ever suspected her of being involved in that murder?" asked Mr Trengove.

polygamist. In Tembu custom you normally have a customary marriage and one of the methods of observing them is for a man who wants to get married to waylay a girl as she goes to the river to fetch water and take her home.

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Handwritten signature or note at the bottom of the page.

'We still despise each other. But we have found a common cause, and it's your money'

Caroline Sullivan with the Sex Pistols



Steve Jones, second from left, Paul Cook, centre, and John Lydon, right, belch, sneer and trade insults with the press yesterday

Gobfathers of punk hit the comeback trail

EIGHTEEN years after dissolving in a flurry of acrimony and saliva, the Sex Pistols are back. The band that started punk rock held a press conference yesterday at the 100 Club, central London, scene of their early gigs, to announce plans for a tour and live album this summer.



The group in their heyday, with Sid Vicious third from left

Lydon remained tersely true to the punk spirit, but his bleached, mangled hair was rudely shown up by the sleekness of his red and white leisure jacket. Conspicuous by his absence was charismatic former manager Malcolm McLaren, who has not been on speaking terms with the group since being sued over royalties 10 years ago.

But he admitted he was depressed about "all those geriatrics that'll turn up. I hope at Finsbury Park it rains and they all get their wheelchairs stuck in the mud."

There will not be many rehearsals, he said. "There's no need. You know these songs as well as we do. I bet you play them better as well."

Ex-Pistols' half-cocked careers

The superannuated rebels who swapped anarchy in the UK for holidays in the sun

JOHN Lydon has had the most successful post-Pistols career. The next vehicle for his rants was Public Image Ltd, which had 12 hit singles between 1978 and 1982.

The former threat to civilisation now spends his days pottering between his home studio and the beach.

He went to ground in west London, but a couple of years ago, wrote an autobiography, Was A Teenage Sex Pistol.

trouble the charts. He cultivated a drug habit before heading up and forming a band, the New Order.

Bank admits forecasting errors

City eyes rate cut as governor says he was 'too pessimistic'

Larry Elliott Economics Editor THE City was last night put on alert for a fresh cut in the cost of borrowing in the coming months after Eddie George, the Governor of the Bank of England, admitted that he had been wrong in his assessment of the economy.

consistently overdone". Analysts said Mr George's comments reflected a marked softening of his stance following the bruising battle over interest rates with the Chancellor since May last year.

reduction in base rates to revive the economy. Although some analysts believe that the scope for further interest rate cuts is limited, the weakness of industry, the reluctance of consumers to spend and the unexpected rise in unemployment last month are putting pressure on the Chancellor to provide a further stimulus.

tionary bias, adding that it sought low inflation as a means to securing "sustained growth of activity and employment".

This is Taki the Victim, a man who is on the run from the world, who is so paranoid about his security he carries a gun — unbeknown to his aristocratic hosts — to every society party he attends (except in London where he cannot acquire an arms license). He goes, in his own words, "armed to the teeth".

Blunkett sanctions pupil opt-out

John Carvel Education Editor

ALIENATED 14-year-olds would be taken out of school to spend much of the week at a further education college or on the factory floor under controversial Labour proposals unveiled in the Guardian today by David Blunkett, the shadow education secretary.

scheme had been tried by the Inner London Education Authority in the 1970s. "One of the dangers is that it could be seen as a siren reference, labelling children who do not prosper at school and dumping them on further education colleges. We wish the colleges every success."

The Labour plan has been designed to escape some of the criticism from teacher unions and local authorities which greeted leaks of similar recommendations due to be published later this month by Sir Ron Dearing, the Government's chief curriculum adviser.

'We must make the leaving age a reality rather than a rule often broken by persistent truancy'

He was impressed by an experiment at Galsdale secondary school in Nottingham where all 14 and 15-year-old pupils were offered the chance to study for NVQs at local colleges of further education.

Doug McAvooy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said it would forcefully resist Sir Ron's plan for low-achieving pupils to be allowed to become "semi-detached" from school at 14 and pursue vocational courses at college. This amounted to tampering with the statutory minimum leaving age, he warned.

David Higgins, the head teacher, said about half the 240 pupils in this age range took the vocational option, studying subjects such as engineering, bakery, hairdressing, business administration, art and design.

first direct 06:30 11:15 23:30 Ian Francis enjoys his breakfast and settles his Visa bill. Jake O'Sullivan teases his mother as she asks about her mortgage. Bob Sparks wakes with a start and calls to pay his gas bill.

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Hundreds of millions of pounds of Class A drug imported as Customs success in seizures has led to big increase in 'wholesale' price

Heroin dealers target 'lucrative' UK

Weak controls at borders ease smugglers' task

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

INTERNATIONAL traffickers have targeted Britain as a new market for heroin and are importing hundreds of millions of pounds of the Class A drug. Customs and Excise said yesterday.

The traffickers have become interested because heroin sold in the UK now sells at a higher "wholesale" price than the United States or any other European country.

"All the evidence, Customs seizures, police seizures and reports from those close to the users, points to a massive increase in the volume of heroin," said Dick Kellaway, Customs and Excise chief investigation officer, yesterday.

The amount of heroin seized by Customs last year rose by 80 per cent to more than 1.1 tonnes worth £115 million in street value.

"We believe the increase is supplier-led in the sense that heroin is being imported in order to create a market. Most of the heroin seized in 1995 was brought across

dealer level this becomes about £80 to £90 a gram with an individual two-bit paper "wrap" of heroin selling for about £10.

Much of the heroin is believed to come from Turkey and crosses several borders before it reaches the UK. Countries such as Romania, Bulgaria and the former Yugoslavia with very primitive drug detection systems are crucial links in the chain.

One further development is that Turkish traffickers are now developing links with gang networks in Liverpool, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Another factor in the drug seizure figures was the discovery outside of Scotland of significant amounts of the tranquilliser Termezepam for the first time.

Tony Newton, the Cabinet minister responsible for co-ordinating the anti-drug campaign said there was cause for concern in the sharp rise in heroin and ecstasy seizures.

"Britain is now awash with drugs, but we have to recognise that reducing the supply of illegal substances ultimately depends on reducing the demand for them, especially among young people," he said.

The figures show that Customs seized a record 55.6 tonnes of drugs last year compared to 51 tonnes in 1994. A total of 2,323 people were arrested.

The combined amount of cannabis seized throughout the year was 52.5 tonnes, an 11.1 per cent increase, worth £173.4 million.

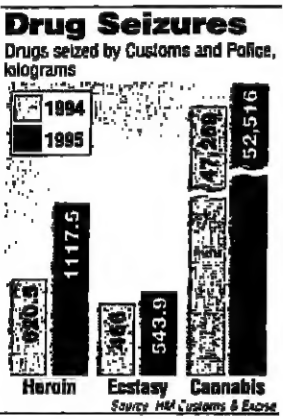
The amount of cocaine seized was 940.7 kgs, down 57.3 per cent, with a street value of £109.5 million. However customs pointed out that the 1994 figure was distorted by three particularly large seizures. Otherwise the 1995 figure would reflect a 125 per cent increase.

One in 10 full time jobs in Customs and Excise are to go overseas next three years as part of plans to remove another 12,000 posts in the Treasury, writes David Henck.

A total of 2,564 jobs will go reducing staff levels from 25,429 to 22,865, according to figures released by Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, outlining the Treasury's expenditure plans for the next three years.

The Inland Revenue is also to see a huge cut in staff from 55,300 this year to 49,590 by 1998. The 5,710 cut is almost entirely on full-time staff.

The Treasury which has already lost a third of its staff since 1990 is to lose another 215 jobs over the next three years. The Valuation Office, which sets house values for council tax purposes, will lose 1,125 jobs — dropping to 4,000 staff by 1999.



Europe from Turkey," said Mr Kellaway. "Several specially made concealments have been found deep inside commercial vehicles which have already crossed seven or eight national frontiers before reaching the UK."

Ministers and police shied away yesterday from predicting a "heroin epidemic" when they released the annual drug seizure figures but did cite evidence of a change in the drugs market.

Mr Kellaway said that enforcement action has reduced supply and consequently kept prices higher in Britain than elsewhere in Europe where there had been a general lowering of heroin prices. "We are in some ways the victims of our own success," he said. "The more we stop the more they want to try and get it into Britain."

Customs officers say that Britain has become a premium market with a kilogram selling uncut for £20,000 at a "wholesale" level. At



A user injects heroin which is now worth £20,000 a kilogram at 'wholesale' level, up to £90 a gram at dealer level and £10 for a two-bit 'wrap' on the street PHOTOGRAPH KEVIN WEAVER

'Old buzz' back in fashion Cannabis author jailed

Alex Bellos traces the changing pattern of consumption in Britain's inner cities

IF YOU wanted to "score" heroin in Sheffield 10 years ago, you would drive over the Pennines to your regular dealer in Manchester. You would buy a bag based on weight — maybe a few grammes costing several hundred pounds to get you through the week.

Today you don't need to leave the city. Heroin use has spread from one council estate in north Sheffield to several other socially deprived areas. Each estate probably has a small-time dealer, this time selling by price. You buy a £5 or £10 wrap, or however much you need immediately.

This pattern of changing consumption was mirrored in courbutions all over Britain, said Harry Shapiro at the Institute for the Study of Drug Dependence. His recent research on heroin use was based on information from outreach workers and drug agencies.

Mike Linnell, at the Manchester drugs agency Life-Line, believes the main factor determining changing drug use is availability. The first big influx of heroin came in the early 1980s. Mr Shapiro says supply stayed steady until three years ago, when it began to boom, pushing prices down and improving quality. He puts this down to "deregulation" of traditional trafficking routes caused by political instability in places like Afghanistan, the former Yugoslavia and Eastern Europe.

Most of heroin's new recruits conform to the "junkie" image — injecting users on the poverty line, possibly homeless with mental health problems. But there is growing anecdotal evidence that recreational drug users are taking to it. For much of the generation that began taking ecstasy in the late 1980s, heroin was an mat-

tractive drug symbolised by the advertising campaign Heroin Screws You Up.

But as ecstasy use has become mainstream — an estimated 500,000 people take it every week — and as regular users look for a new buzz, some have decided to dabble in the older drug.

These young people are more likely to smoke it or snort it. Often it is sold simply as "brown", to avoid the unfashionable connotations of intravenous use. Being able to buy it at £5 or £10 a shot makes it especially attractive.

Cocaine has also benefited from the acceptance of drugs that mass use of ecstasy has brought, according to several drugs agencies. Liz Skeiton, of Crew 2000 in Edinburgh, said the atmosphere in many Scottish clubs had changed dramatically recently, as ravers bored with ecstasy have switched to cocaine.

"You hear that cocaine is as cheap as £40," she said. "If that's true its dangerous; at that price it is encouraging people to synthesise it into crack."

Marlowe advertised the 128-

Conviction for 'incitement' has angered campaigners, Duncan Campbell reports

A MAN who published a book explaining how to grow cannabis was yesterday jailed for 12 months for incitement, the first time the law has been used in this way. The judge ordered all copies to be destroyed.

Civil liberty campaigners last night expressed concern at the jailing of someone for publishing freely available material.

Michael Marlowe, aged 51, a disabled musician, was sentenced to 12 months at Worcester crown court for marketing and selling nearly 500 copies of Tricameral Semilla under the name of Maria Warner Marlowe, of Flaxley, Gloucestershire, was also convicted of harvesting his own plants. An appeal is to be lodged.

Judge Michael Mott told him: "This was a particularly blatant incitement to people to commit crime when you remained hidden behind a double alias."

Marlowe advertised the 128-

page book in Private Eye, Viz and Hemp Nation. The book, which uses domestic technology and common gardening materials, is one of 33 similar publications on sale in bookshops nationally. Would-be purchasers were invited to write to Wild Thing distributors at a PO box in Worcester sending £12.

In October 1994, Marlowe was raided by police who seized his customer database which contained about 250 names and addresses. This list was passed to local forces who raided 20 people who had purchased the book. One was a teacher from Tunbridge Wells, Kent, who had intended to grow a small amount of cannabis in a sauna room.

Last month, at Worcester crown court, prosecuting counsel Philip Bown said of Marlowe who was charged with incitement to produce cannabis: "This man is a crusader."

Andrew Sharpe, defending, said: "He has gone over the line in what is permissible in encouragement. It's the first time a prosecution has been brought dealing with the publication of a book on a cultivation method."

Evidence that other similar cannabis-growing books had been in wide circulation for many years was deemed inadmissible. Marlowe, who was making his first book-publishing venture, was convicted on a majority decision.

Marlowe said before sentence that he believed cannabis should be decriminalised. "We feel we've been lousy by the state for a self-indulgence that has no victims."

The director of Liberty, John Wadham, said: "It is very rare in any country for people to go to prison merely for what they write."

A spokesman for the Mick Marlowe defence campaign said: "Using this archaic charge of incitement which has not been used to suppress a book for over 100 years has very serious implications."

The book will now be republished in Amsterdam, with the words "Not for sale in the United Kingdom" on it.

Judges told of 'malign influence' on West trial

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

SENSATIONALIST press coverage and media contracts with witnesses exerted a "malign influence" over the trial of Rosemary West, the Court of Appeal was told yesterday.

All of the 10 murders for which she was convicted could have been committed by her husband, Fred, acting alone, the court heard.

Richard Ferguson QC, applying for leave to appeal on

behalf of Mrs West, said that the evidence on three counts of murder was tenuous and on a further seven it was virtually non-existent. Mrs West, who was convicted last November at Winchester crown court of the murders of 10 young women and girls, did not attend the hearing.

Before meeting his wife, Fred West had murdered, raped, assaulted and harassed young women, Mr Ferguson told Lord Taylor, the Lord Chief Justice, sitting with Mr Justice Mitchell and Mr Justice Newman. The possibility

of Fred West being solely responsible was the hook on which Rosemary West hung her case.

Mr Ferguson said the three main arguments were that the media had exercised a "malign influence" before and during the trial, that grossly prejudicial evidence was allowed; and that the jury had not been properly directed on the evidence by the trial judge.

He argued that there had been an abuse of process in allowing the trial to go ahead because of the lapse of time

since the first murder in 1971 and the prejudicial publicity. "Similar fact" evidence about Mrs West's sexual proclivities should not have been allowed. Three of the charges, including those of the murder of Mrs West's daughter, Heather, and step-daughter, Charmaine, should have been severed from the other seven because of their different nature.

Referring to pre-trial coverage of the case, Mr Ferguson said: "It's all highly sensational and highly unfortunate." Mrs West had been

linked with "the House of Horror" and had been described as a nymphomaniac. One story suggested that she stood to make £10 million from her story and another referred to her as a booker.

Prosecution witnesses had made agreements with the media for sums of up to six figures, he said. Clearly there was a temptation for them to exaggerate what had happened. "Put bluntly the more lurid the account, the more valuable the contract."

One witness who had agreed a contract was shown

to have lied in court about her involvement, he said.

"This was a danger that journalists attending the trial could discuss the evidence with the witnesses with whom they had agreements."

The hearing continues today.

Leo Goadley, Mrs West's solicitor, last night denied suggestions by her relatives that she had not wanted the appeal to take place. He said she had instructed him to continue, although she had been unwilling to attend court because of the likely media attention.

Met pays student £7,500 for assault and imprisonment

Clare Dyer

THE Metropolitan Police yesterday agreed to pay an Irish student £7,500 compensation and legal costs in an out-of-court settlement for assault and false imprisonment.

Paul Moran, aged 32, claimed he was stopped and questioned by PCs Keith Lloyd and Ian Whitney as he left his central London house at midnight on December 23, 1992.

He said he was called "an Irish c**t", thrown against

his front door, had his hand smashed against a wall, was struck forcibly and thrown into a police van where one officer hit him in the face.

He was then taken to Marylebone police station, searched and unlawfully kept in a cell until 2.30am.

The Police Complaints Authority upheld his complaint of unlawful arrest and detention. The station's custody officer and the arresting officers were strictly admonished, and the Met admitted liability for assault and false imprisonment.



"I'll never forget my mother's face when I told her."

"I was stunned to hear that I had cancer. At my age, I just couldn't accept it. The fear just grew and grew, like the cancer itself. That changed when I began to come to the Marie Curie Hospice Centre.

In a strange way, it's the most positive place I've ever been. They have taken away a lot of my fears. And when your fear is lifted you can feel your dignity coming back."

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Hearts & Minds Against Cancer

Hint of support for Alternative Voting system regarded as step in right direction by reform advocates

Blair shift cheers Lib Dems

Patrik Wintour, Chief Political Correspondent

CO-OPERATION between the two main opposition parties moved a step closer yesterday when senior Liberal Democrats gave an unexpectedly warm welcome to reports that the Labour leader, Tony Blair, is shifting away from first-past-the-post for elections to the Commons.

A variant of which was supported in 1993 by Labour's internal working party on electoral systems, could not be described as proportional representation, which Mr Blair believes hands too much power to small parties. Labour is already committed to holding a referendum on the electoral system for the Commons, but Mr Blair has been unconvinced of the need for reform.

News of his fresh approach, trailed in advance of the weekend Liberal Democrat conference — was greeted by senior Liberal Democrats yesterday as a sign of flexibility. One senior Liberal Democrat closely involved in the dialogue with Labour said: "It suggests Labour is openly in a fluid position. Before we were in an unsustainable position in which Mr Blair said he was in favour of a referendum, but to the extent he had a personal opinion on the subject, he was opposed to change."

The Liberal Democrat MP added, "AV is not acceptable as a system for us, but we regard any movement by Mr Blair, or sign that he is thinking these constitutional issues through, as encouraging and conducive to dialogue."

Under AV, instead of voting for one candidate in a single-member constituency, the voter lists the candidates in order of preference. A candidate has to obtain an overall majority to be elected. If no candidate has an overall majority of first preferences, the lowest placed candidate drops out with his preferences transferred. The process continues until one candidate achieves an overall majority.

John Prescott and chief whip Donald Dewar, to review whether to bring forward the shadow cabinet elections from November to July. The earlier the election, the more likely it is that some sitting Shadow Cabinet members may be thrown off, including the shadow health secretary, Harriet Harman.

Stephen Bates in Brussels

MICHAEL HOWARD, the Home Secretary, will how to European pressure today and agree to sign an EU declaration against racism and xenophobia which he rejected last year.

The decision discomfited ministers, with Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, saying the British was prepared to agree a common position and wanted to be positive over the issue. Since then Mr Howard, who is Jewish, has come under pressure from Jewish groups in Britain to agree to the declaration in full along with the 14 other member states.

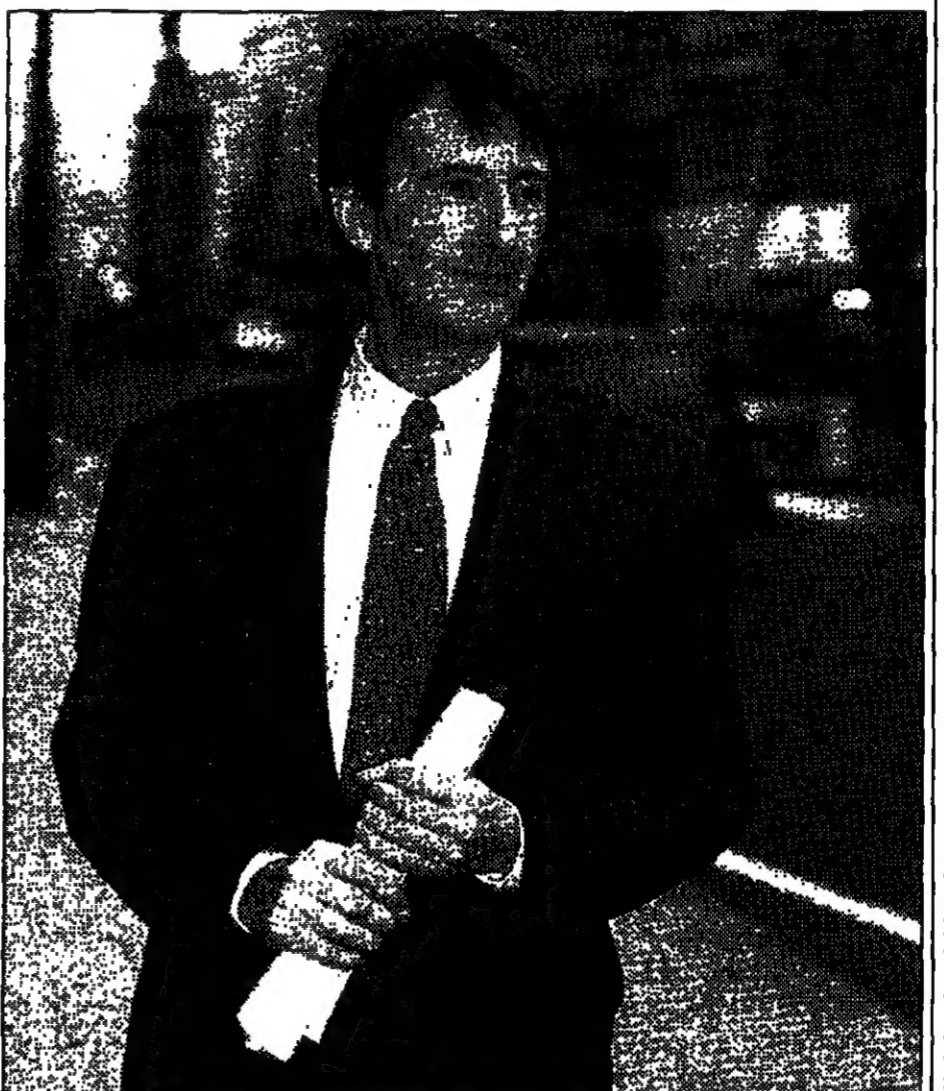
Labour HQ 'broke rules on ballot'

Seumas Milne, Labour Editor

LABOUR'S national executive was yesterday accused by one of its longest-serving members of being unfair and prejudicial against a union factory convenor, who is seeking a rerun of the contested parliamentary selection ballot in Swindon North.

Mr Blair is said to be sympathetic towards the Alternative Vote system, but it was being stressed yesterday that he had reached no conclusions. He believes the system, which would have won 11 fewer seats, Labour would have won one more and the Liberal Democrats 10 more. Most proportional voting systems, by contrast, would have boosted Liberal Democrat seats in 1992 to at least 50.

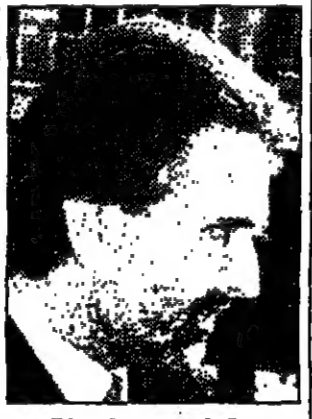
Labour's internal review said AV retained constituency accountability, worked on the clear principle that the winner had to have more than 50 per cent of the votes and allowed voters both to vote for their first choice and then, in their second preference, to vote to stop the political party they most disliked.



Michael Wills... won Swindon contest after 'flawed' procedure

In an affidavit to the court, Mr Evans said that decision had been influenced by prejudice. "All the factors pointed to a rerun of the ballot as the proper course of action," he said.

But in another affidavit Tom Sawyer, Labour's general secretary, said there was no reasonable basis for the NEC not to select the candidate itself. He had seldom



Jim D'Avila... High Court battle to win selection rerun

come across such personal animosity or "ferocity" of views in disputes of this kind. Alan Wilkie, QC, representing the Labour Party, said Mr Wills had done nothing wrong and was outraged. David Bean QC, for Mr D'Avila — who is backed by the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union — argued that divisions in the constituency had been orchestrated by those responsible for the original flawed selection procedure.

Yesterday's hearing was before Judge Sir John Vinelott, who told Labour in January to rerun the Swindon ballot or return to court to justify its decision. He said the imposition of a candidate risked deepening divisions.

Rifkind retreat on referendum

Michael White, Political Editor

SENIOR Tory Euro-sceptics last night stepped up their campaign against deeper European integration as the Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, backed away from his earlier suggestion that a future referendum on Britain's options would not be binding on Parliament.

MPs divided over right question to ask

ASK MOST MPs exactly what question they'd like to see asked in a second European referendum and you quickly discover why Whitehall is nervous about the subject. They come up with such different answers, writes Michael White.

John Redwood, for example, shares Sir James Goldsmith's view that the single currency is too narrow a focus. He would prefer something closer to: "Are you borrowing with Europe as the kind of free trade area envisaged when Britain first joined or would you prefer greater integration?"

Staff of Labour shadow foreign secretary Robin Cook have toyed with ideas. "Now that the single currency is becoming a reality, do you want to be part of it?" is one option.

In evidence to the Commons select committee on foreign affairs Mr Rifkind told MPs that his remarks on Sunday during a BBC interview on LWT had been misinterpreted. Though previous referendums had been legally deemed advisory only — to protect the constitutional supremacy of Parliament — governments have said "in practice they would accept the outcome", he conceded.

As MPs manoeuvred ahead of Thursday's debate on Mr Rifkind's IGC white paper 14 senior Tory MPs, including Norman Lamont and Jonathan Aitken, sent the Foreign Secretary an open letter proposing limits on the powers of the European Parliament, an end to the practice of appointing politicians to the European Commission when they continue behaving like politicians, not officials: abolition of food price fixing, replacing it with a system of direct support to farmers; giving management of fish stocks back to national governments; and overhauling the EU budget formula to reduce the UK contribution.

At the same time John Redwood, the former Tory leadership challenger, attacked both the motivation behind the single currency project — "to create a country called Europe" regardless of the high economic and political cost — and the failure to explain how it would work in practice.

He warned the Prime Minister that it would be "very foolish" to press ahead with a single currency in the face of heavy opposition from Euro-sceptic Cabinet members. Mr Redwood said a single-currency Europe would strip away control over economic policy-making and decimate foreign exchange reserves. "It is a decision of such magnitude that of course parliamentarians must ask the people expressly on this issue. We are not elected to Parliament to give the country away," he said.

Tactics and timing crucial in staging vote on Britain's future in Europe

Why is everyone talking about a referendum again? Because John Major's cabinet is edging towards promising one if Britain looks like joining a single European currency.

But that's years away? Yes and no. The European Commission will decide as early as 1998 which EU states are eligible to join under the strict monetary criteria agreed in the 1991 Maastricht Treaty. In the short term Mr Major wants to placate his Euro-sceptic wing — and Sir James Goldsmith — ahead of the forthcoming inter-governmental conference (IGC) to review progress since Maastricht.

But the IGC is quite separate from the single currency issue? Yes. But economic and monetary union (EMU) cannot be separated from deeper political union. Sceptics say EMU is basically a political concept, which is why it is a bad economic idea.

Timing is crucial then? Yes, the Chancellor believes that, if there's a strong euro, Britain will not want to be left outside, and it won't mean a loss of sovereignty. He does not like referendums either. Talk of him resigning over the decision is fanned by his enemies, not his friends. But he is increasingly isolated in Cabinet.

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US court orders commerce department to stop Italy's use of illegal driftnets in the Mediterranean

Mafia fishing fleets face trade ban

John Hooper in Rome

WHILE the European Union's fisheries commissioner, Emma Bonino, has been reading the riot act to British trawlers, her own country has been told it could face a \$1 billion a year trade ban for over-fishing the Mediterranean.

Last month a US judge concluded that Italian boats were defying an international ban on the use of huge plastic-film driftnets and ordered the department of commerce to enforce a US law implementing the ban. This would mean stopping Italian fish imports unless Rome complies.

According to US sources, Italian officials have pleaded that much of the driftnet fleet is beyond the reach of government enforcement because it

is controlled by organised crime.

Sticky's Cosa Nostra and other mafias in Puglia, Calabria and the Naples area are known to have used local fishing fleets to transport contraband, notably drugs.

Driftnets, which as their name suggests, are left to drift, unattached to a vessel, are used by Italian fishermen to catch swordfish and tuna, but they also trap numerous other species.

In 1989 the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution calling on members to suspend the use of driftnets longer than 1.5 miles from the end 1992. Numerous countries, including Japan, Korea and Taiwan, have since complied. The EU enacted its own ban four years ago.

A recent Food and Agriculture Organisation report said the main area of illegal fish-

Brussels commissioner accuses UK of inaction

THE European fisheries commissioner, Emma Bonino, accused Britain yesterday of failing to act to prevent foreign ships from plundering its fish quota by "quota hopping".

Mrs Bonino, in London for a meeting with the fisheries minister Tony Baldry

said that between 1986 and 1994 Britain had failed to provide "matching funds" which would have unlocked EU money set aside to cover the cost of fishermen taking their boats out of service.

Britain had been expected to contribute 30 per cent of the cost, the Euro-

pean Union providing the remaining 70 per cent. But Mrs Bonino said: "The EU part of the money was there but the national part — the matching funds — was not available."

She said the European element — estimated to be about £12 million — was now "lost forever".

Otherwise it faces an embargo on the import of all its fish and fish products.

Additional sanctions would be imposed if the import ban failed to have an effect. A spokesman for the US embassy in Rome said: "The Italians have assured us that they want to reach an agreement to avoid an embargo, and obviously we would prefer to handle it that way as well."

ing was the Mediterranean, "with vessels predominantly being of Italian flag or origin".

"Given the fragility and biological importance of the Mediterranean Sea, the continued use of this gear in this area is viewed by many as a matter of considerable international concern," the report added.

The action which led to last month's ruling was brought by a consortium of environmental and animal defence groups, including the RSPCA and the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS).

Patricia Forkan, HSUS's executive vice-president, said yesterday: "Italy has a driftnet fleet of more than 500 vessels, most of which use drift-

nets that are 5 to 6 miles in length. The bulk of the catch, some 82 per cent, is discarded. Thousands of whales, dolphins, sharks and other marine life have died."

Judge Thomas Aquilino ruled in the US court of international trade in New York that "Italians continue to engage in large-scale driftnet fishing ... in defiance of the

Row as author backs Serbs

Ian Traynor in Bonn

ONE of the foremost living writers in Germany has sparked a bitter row over guilt and innocence in the Balkan wars with a new book defending the Serbs, who he says have been maligned by the distortions of the international media and Western governments.

German intellectuals are in uproar over the book by Peter Handke, aged 53, an Austrian citizen of mixed German-Slovene blood. He is now on a controversial reading tour of Germany, Austria and Slovenia promoting the book, in which he attacks the Western media, intellectuals and governments for their treatment of the Serbs.

Mr Handke is the most prominent figure in the German cultural world to come out so strongly in defence of the Serbs, prompting accusations that he is oblivious to genocide, war crimes and the destruction of Bosnia. His policy has been keenly pro-Croatian for years.

The book, *A Writer's Journey to the Rivers Danube, Sava, Morava and Drina, or Justice for Serbia*, takes the form of a travelogue combined with an emotional and violent denunciation of what he says is widespread anti-Serb bias.

Bosnian victims of the Serb detention camps have been staging protests outside the venues of Mr Handke's reading tour, calling on him to speak not only to the Serbs, but to them too.

Despite the furore he has sparked, Handke has French, and even Serb writers accuse him of naivety, wilful malice and ignorance — Mr Handke is utterly unapologetic.

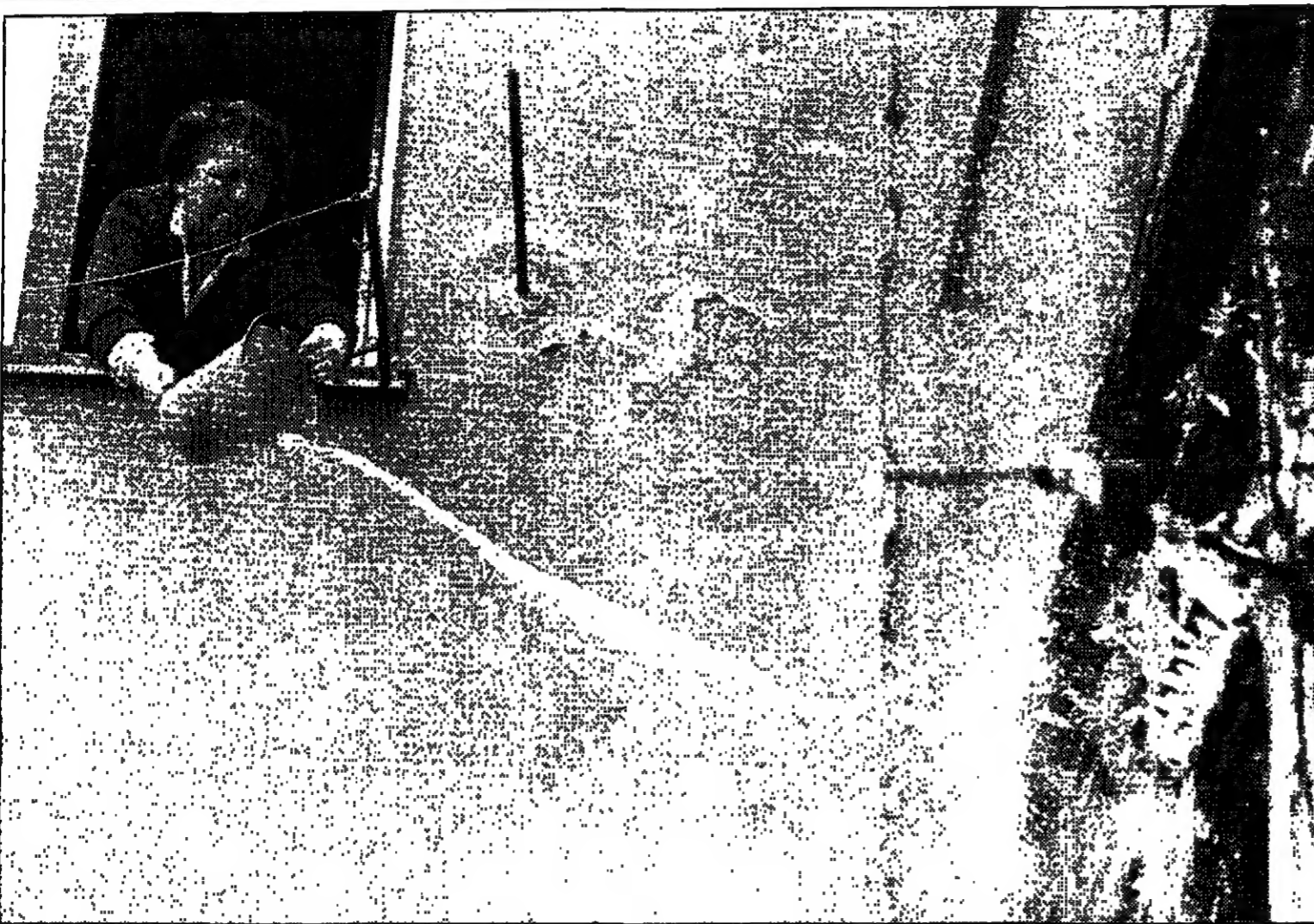
In an interview published yesterday in the Vienna news magazine *Profil*, he stepped up his attacks on German policy, and hammered the Austrian government for good measure.

"The politicians who consciously or unconsciously collaborated in destroying Yugoslavia have to see that they just can't exclude Serbia. The only country that gains from the current solution is Germany."

"Germany has every interest in having as many servile little states as dependent on it, the economic giant, as possible. That gets clearer and clearer."

Austrian policy, particularly when the wars erupted in 1991, was "unforgivable, eternally unforgivable", he said.

"I've never experienced anything so awful in my life ..."



A drop in the ocean... A Bosnian woman tries to put out a fire in a flat in the Sarajevo suburb of Grabavica yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: Sava Radovanovic

Serbs leave final stronghold blazing

Julian Borger in Sarajevo

TO THE sound of crackling fires and exploding ammunition, Bosnian Serb police pulled out of their last Sarajevo stronghold yesterday, paving the way for the city's final reunification after four years of war and siege.

About 40 policemen in blue fatigues stood to attention as the Serb flag was removed from their improvised headquarters in Grabavica, the fifth and final Sarajevo suburb to be transferred to the Bosnian government under the Dayton accord.

Milanko Karišk, a local politician, vowed that the Serbs would return to reclaim their share of the Bosnian capital. "We will be the last to leave but the first to come back. It may be in this generation or the next, but we will return."

A nearby roof which had been burning fiercely exploded as one of many weapons caches caught fire.

The police were unperturbed. The Serb authorities have done nothing to hinder the withdrawal of their forces, who are determined to maintain ethnic segregation.

The campaign of arson appeared to be aimed at the 1,500 Serbs, Muslims and Croats who have opted to remain in Grabavica. Gangs of Serb arsonists have started fires directly above and below flats which are still occupied.

With very little firefighting equipment at their disposal, Nato troops can only try to save civilians trapped in burning high-rise blocks.

Sixteen local residents who had hoped to stay in their flats until the arrival of the federation police fled fires and intimidation to spend the

night in a "safe house" set up by the UN refugee agency.

The safe house, two flats on the first floor of an apartment block, is protected by unarmed UN police. Nato, ever reluctant to be drawn deeper into ordinary policing, refused to post a permanent guard.

Three months after the deployment of the Nato-led implementation force (I-For), Nato officials reported general compliance with military aspects of the Dayton agreement but said one significant issue remained unresolved in the run-up to the 90-day milestone at midnight tonight.

By then, the armies are meant to have pulled back two kilometres from the line separating the federation and the Serb Republic. Major Simon Haselock, the Nato spokesman in Sarajevo, said the Muslim-led Bosnian army

had shown no signs of withdrawing from its main bases in the city, which fall within the demilitarised zone.

Major Haselock said I-For had rejected a request by the Bosnian government for permission to keep 4,500 of its men inside Sarajevo's Tito Barracks and other bases.

A Bosnian Croat commander indicted for war crimes by the UN tribunal is being sheltered by the Croatian government — an opposition newspaper claims.

Ivica Rajic was indicted seven months ago for the murder of 16 Muslims in the Bosnian village of Stupni Do in 1993. Under the Dayton accord the Croatian government must hand him over but the Feral Tribune said he was staying under an assumed name at a holiday complex run by the Croatian defence ministry in Split.

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France sends in conscripts to stop school violence

Paul Webster in Paris

MORE than 2,000 extra national servicemen are to be drafted into French schools in one of several urgent measures to protect pupils and teachers from increasing violence and outside threats.

Details will be announced tomorrow by the education minister, Francois Bayrou. The measures will form part of a new programme based on three years of experiments involving 2,500 national servicemen. The men, who do not carry arms or wear uniforms, are already serving their 10 months' conscription period as school auxiliary staff.

The prime minister, Alain Juppé, announced on television the dispatch of 2,200 extra recruits before the autumn term — without linking it to the Dunblane massacre, which has been front page news in France. But education officials said the Scottish murders had added to French concern that schools were becoming more unsafe.

Apart from regular reports of violence against teachers and pupils by outsiders, there

have been some high-profile cases. In 1993 nursery school children were taken hostage in the Paris suburb Neuilly, and last year a bomb exploded outside a Jewish school in Lyon.

The extra national servicemen will also help to control internal violence, including attacks on staff by parents and pupils, and student vandalism, such as the bomb made by three youths which blew up a washroom in a school in northern France last week.

Mr Juppé said one of the most urgent measures to be discussed at tomorrow's cabinet meeting was barbed punishment for intruders, including fines up to £1,200 or prison terms for trespass.

Most schools already have video cameras and restricted access.

An education official said the transfer of national servicemen followed increasing demands from staff, particularly in poor suburbs, for more help.

The conscripts' main tasks are to run clubs, provide escorts for outings, help administrative staff and act as monitors.

Belgium's busy robbers create cash drought

Stephen Bates in Brussels

BANK robbers are close to succeeding, where two world wars and the European Union's grand design for economic and monetary union have so far failed, in creating a cash crisis in Belgium.

The situation — which has left some banks and businesses almost out of cash — is due to a strike by security guards protesting about the risks they face following a spate of armed robberies in which two of their number have died.

The government called in 2,000 heavily armed police on Sunday to supervise the collection in armoured vans of takings from large stores and companies.

The interior minister, Johan Vande Lanotte, who organised the operation, insisted that he was not trying to break the strike.

"The action was absolutely necessary because everything was getting

very unsafe," he said. "My concern is security, not the economy."

But the operation may have come just in time, because there is a serious possibility of the banks running out of ready cash: virtually none has been delivered for a fortnight.

Two-thirds of cashpoint machines are now empty, leaving hundreds of Brussels residents and tourists without money over the weekend. Businesses are being advised to pay clients with what notes they have in their tills rather than by bank transfer. They have been asked to take their cash to the banks.

It is estimated the money supply could dry up by the end of the week unless a settlement is reached with the 1,200 striking guards.

The guards struck after the second fatality in three months. Marc Brusselmans, aged 36, was shot after handing over money bags he had been about to deliver to a night safe at

Acroz in the province of Hainaut.

Belgium's usually placid streets are gaining atmosphere of the Wild West, as robbers routinely shoot it out with the police and security staff in broad daylight.

The 50 attacks last year were exceeded this year in January alone, when there were 73 raids.

The strikers are demanding an end to night collections, and three rather than two guards in each van. Some security companies have said they will continue to collect money at night, and have offered volunteers the equivalent of 40p an hour extra in danger money.

Stephane Boeque, a spokesman for the Belgian arm of Group 4 Security, said: "Moving transports to daytime will just move everything into the light. The robberies already cause more victims in the day. An extra man would not offer any additional security — he'd just be one more potential victim."

World news in brief

Bonn criticises Paris for its defence plans

SIMMERING tension between France and Germany over Nato's future and European defence was exposed yesterday when Bonn told Paris that its thinking on security was out of line and that it would resist French attempts to dilute the transatlantic alliance.

In a speech outside Bonn, Werner Hoyer, the German official responsible for European Union policy, rejected French proposals for reforming Europe's security and signalled opposition to any attempt to do away with the Nato command structure headed by the United States.

Mr Hoyer's speech revealed German reservations and frustrations about President Jacques Chirac's penchant for going it alone on military matters.

"The reform ideas that French defence minister [Charles] Millon recently announced do not agree with Germany's ideas," Mr Hoyer said. "We clearly reject ideas that would end up replacing Nato's integrated command structure and will speak out against every measure that could even give the impression of driving a wedge into the transatlantic relationship." — Ian Traynor, Bonn.

Kurd expulsion calls

LEADING government and opposition politicians in Germany called yesterday for the expulsion of Kurdish activists after a weekend of battles between police and Kurds that left hundreds injured and hundreds more in jail.

The riots, which happened during a banned demonstration in the north-west town of Dortmund to coincide with the Kurdish New Year, shocked the public.

President Roman Herzog said last night that foreigners engaging in "violence and terror" had forfeited the right to stay in Germany. The foreign minister, Klaus Kinkel, called the violence a "declaration of war" against the German legal system and Manfred Kanther, the interior minister, blamed the PKK — Kurdistan Worker's Party — which is banned in Germany.

The opposition Social Democrats called on the 500,000-strong Kurdish community in Germany to isolate the PKK.

An anonymous female caller to local radio stations near the north-west town of Eschweiler yesterday threatened that children would be killed unless the 600 Kurds detained were released.

About 4,000 Kurds took part in the demonstration. The 400 injured included 40 police. — Ian Traynor, Bonn.

Poll blow to Mugabe

FEWER than half of Zimbabwe's 4.9 million voters cast ballots in the weekend presidential polls, seen as a mere formality after a boycott by those challenging the incumbent, Robert Mugabe.

Interim figures released by election officials yesterday showed that 1,537,066 people — about 31.4 per cent of the registered electorate — voted in the elections, which Mr Mugabe won by default after his two opponents pulled out of the race.

"It will be a major blow to Mugabe, especially considering how hard he has been campaigning," said John Makumbe, a political analyst at the University of Zimbabwe in Harare.

In the month before the elections Mr Mugabe, aged 72, held 40 campaign rallies, calling for a massive vote in an attempt to prove he still enjoyed support after 16 years in power. His last opponent, Bishop Abel Muzorewa, pulled out on the eve of the polls and his other challenger, the veteran politician Ndabandaba Sithole, withdrew last Tuesday. — Raster, Harare.

Amnesty slams UN body

THE United Nations' top human-rights watchdog opened its annual session yesterday to praise from the UN secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and criticism from Amnesty International.

Amnesty urged the Human Rights Commission to put five countries — China, Turkey, Nigeria, Indonesia and Colombia — on its agenda for the first time.

"The commission is losing its credibility and will show itself to be weak and self-contradictory if it continues to ignore the fact that human rights are brazenly suppressed in these countries," Amnesty said.

In a placatory opening speech, Mr Boutros-Ghali said human rights would be best promoted by a combination of diplomacy, democracy and development.

He said the commission's work was more necessary than ever, given the upsurge in atrocities committed during civil wars. "It is the populations themselves which are targeted, humiliated, tortured. Civilians, including women and children, are massacred pitilessly." — A.P. Geneva.

Message of reconciliation

HOURS after his election, Sierra Leone's new president, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, appealed yesterday to refugees from his civil war to return home and urged citizens to co-operate in bringing peace and economic stability.

"With Sierra Leone's wealth in human and material resources, I see no reason why the ingenuity, talent and drive of our citizens should not be utilized to create a new society," Mr Kabbah said.

The leader of Sierra Leone's oldest political party was declared the winner of a presidential runoff held on Friday. Mr Kabbah, aged 64, won 59.4 per cent of the votes, defeating John Karefa-Smart.

Mr Kabbah said his government would continue attempts launched by the outgoing military regime to bring the rebels to peace talks. On Sunday the military government claimed that the rebel army had agreed to an immediate ceasefire and peace talks although there was no confirmation from the rebels. — A.P. Freetown.



Recruits from the banned Ukrainian national assembly train at their base near Khust, 350 miles west of Kiev. Since Russia's parliament voted to keep the Soviet Union, Ukrainian nationalists have stepped up their activities

Hundred dead in disco fire

ABOUT 100 people were killed in a blaze early yesterday in a Manila disco jammed with youngsters celebrating the end of the Philippine academic year, rescue workers said.

Many appeared to have been trampled to death in a stampede for the narrow passage leading to the exit at the Ozone Disco Pub in the Quizon City district of the capital. Others were killed when the blazing ceiling collapsed on them.

Teenage survivors described a desperate rush for the door when lights went out and flames roared through the nightspot. "I fell down near the exit door and people were stepping on me," said one. "I thought I was going to die." — Raster, Manila.

Moscow bus bomb made safe

A POWERFUL bomb left on a bus in the Russian capital was defused 15 minutes before it would have gone off, security sources said yesterday. The bomb, almost nine pounds of explosive with a timer attached, was found by the bus driver on Sunday afternoon when he heard something ticking inside an abandoned parcel.

The bus's route took it along Kutuzovskiy Prospekt, the elite "government chaussee" along which Boris Yeltsin's motorcade travels between his home and the Kremlin. A possible link to the Chechen separatist movement was being investigated. — James Mack, Moscow.

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Taiwanese flee 'front-line' islet

Andrew Higgins
in Tung Chu island,
Matsu archipelago

IT TAKES Chen Chi-ming little more than a minute to sprint from his house along a paddled path to a Taoist temple and down into what must be Taiwan's loneliest bomb shelter.

Burrowed into a rain-lashed bluff barely a dozen miles from the scene of Chen's latest war games, and even closer to the Chinese mainland, the reinforced bunker was built decades ago to protect scores of people from the shells of the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

Bombast threat to Los Angeles

LOWER-LEVEL Chinese officials threatened to launch nuclear bombs at Los Angeles if the United States defends Taiwan against any Chinese attack, the state department said.

Tung (Eastern) Chu and nearby Hsi (Western) Chu, fewer than 200 remained. Gale-force winds and driving rain seem to have kept the Chinese navy in port yesterday. A PLA ground force of more than 150,000 troops, massed along the coast a few miles away, was reported to have begun its part in massive combined manoeuvres that will straddle Taiwan's first democratic presidential election on Saturday.

shackle row of empty video game parlours, silent karaoke bars and grocery shops. Marchants who stayed to watch their shops curse China for ruining business. Soldiers, usually their best customers, are mostly confined to their bunkers and pillboxes.

On a fine day, the mainland is clearly visible from Tung Chu, a barren speck dotted with statues of Chiang Kai-shek and huge slogans demanding vigilance and, one day, vengeance against the PLA for driving Generalissimo Chiang from the mainland in 1949.

Israeli blockade keeps mother and baby apart

Derek Brown in Abu Dis

BRITISH aid worker in Palestine has been separated from her baby son for almost three weeks by Israel's border closures.

she has worked with Save the Children. Marrying Dr Yunis gave Jo Simister no right to live in Israeli-controlled territory.

to foreign passport holders, including aid workers. Dr Yunis has an additional problem. His family lives in a refugee camp in Rafah, at the southern end of the Gaza Strip.



Mass exodus... Taiwanese civilians fleeing Matsu Island wait to leave the boat on the Taiwanese mainland yesterday. They travelled with soldiers who have completed two years of military service on Matsu. PHOTOGRAPH: EDDIE SHAW

Riot for body of rebel leader

Lorna Pardomuan
in Jakarta

SEVERAL hundred youths rioted in the Indonesian province of Irian Jaya yesterday after they were refused access to a town where the body of a jailed independence leader was being taken for burial.

A military spokesman, Captain Edi Sulistyadi, said riots broke out in the town of Akepura when the body of Thomas Wapal Wainggai, who died last Tuesday while serving a prison sentence in Jakarta, arrived for burial in the provincial capital Jayapura, 12 miles away. It seems that the protesters, mainly students, wanted to take Wainggai's body to the university where he taught.

Explorer adds spice to historic adventure

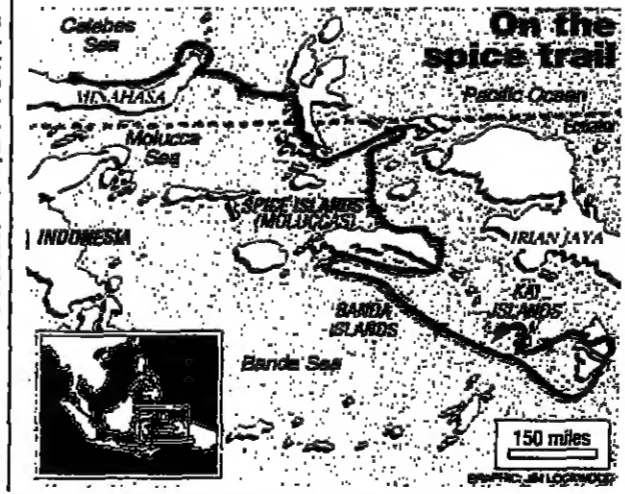
John Aglionby in Jakarta on how the Internet is to record 19th-century perils on voyage retracing a naturalist's steps

THE Anglo-Irish explorer and author Tim Severin has embarked on a perilous voyage through Indonesia's remote spice islands, retracing the steps of the pioneering 19th-century naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace.

Mr Severin, aged 55, has already crossed the Atlantic in a leatherskin boat named the St Brendan, to prove that fifth century Irish monks could have discovered America, and has also retraced the routes of Sinbad the Sailor, Jason's Argonauts and Marco Polo.

Named the Alfred Wallace, it will travel through the Moluccan islands in honour of the adventurer who, with Charles Darwin, first announced the theory of natural selection.

At the moment the winds are light enough to begin our sailing lessons without too many risks, but progress is mostly with a little outboard engine," Mr Severin wrote in an electronic mail message sent to news agencies via satellite.



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News in brief

Parisians burn homeless man

Four youths doused two homeless men sleeping in a central Paris doorway with alcohol and set one alight, burning him to death, French radio reported.

Fruit surprise

The Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi said yesterday that she and her followers had escaped a pelted at a memorial ceremony for the former prime minister U Nu, because the young men hired by the authorities to throw tomatoes at them refused to do so. — AP.

Spymaster's end

Ray Cline, head of the CIA intelligence directorate in the early 1960s, who later wrote that it "was not illogical" for the agency to employ the Mafia to assassinate Fidel Castro, has died at the age of 77. He was suffering from Alzheimer's disease. — AP.

Greek poet dies

The Greek poet and Nobel laureate Odysseus Elytis died at his Athens home yesterday, aged 84, apparently from a heart attack. — AP.

Voodoo devotees mark tragic diaspora

Benin is celebrating how slavery took its religion across the world — and enriched Western culture, writes Howard French

THERE are no factory whistles to compete with the church bells or the muzzin-battered town of Ouidah.

walked on our soil they began calling us fetishists," he said through an interpreter. "That was the first of many efforts by whites to introduce their beliefs and destroy our culture."

Benin's president named January 10 a holiday in honour of Vodoun

Benin's president, Nicéphore Soglo, earlier this year named January 10 a national holiday in honour of Vodoun.

Poll runoff to pick president

VOTERS in Benin went to the polls yesterday to choose between President Nicéphore Soglo and his predecessor, Mathieu Kérékou, a former Marxist who ruled for 17 years.

A saturated arms race

There are better ways of spending \$5 billion

THE ARMS TRADE bazaar is thriving in the Middle East, with the United Arab Emirates the latest buyer in the field for sophisticated goodies. The three biggest international arms merchants — the US, Britain and France — have just submitted final proposals for a deal involving up to 80 state-of-the-art planes at a cost of \$5 billion. Britain, as the Guardian reported yesterday, may be close to clinching a separate contract for a new "super-intelligent" type of cruise missile. There is much expert salivation at what is being described as possibly the last contract of its size and kind this century. The British public will be invited to applaud the efforts of those, in Lady Thatcher's famous phrase, who are battling for Britain. But — just weeks after the Scott report — should we not pause and ask what purpose is served by this single-minded pursuit of the sale of lethal technology?

France and the US have already concluded defence related deals with the UAE for more than \$4 billion in the past two years. If the transactions now being discussed go through, the total bill will work out at roughly \$6,000 per head of the country's population. If the figure is calculated in terms of UAE nationals (who only constitute a quarter of total inhabitants) then it will cost them \$20,000 each. Another way of doing the sums would show a cost of \$120,000 per square kilometre of semi-arid desert. The UAE can raise the cash, but these figures illustrate the absurdity of arming small territories to the hilt.

These deals are being proposed not because they make strategic sense but because these weapons are the status symbols of mini-statehood virility — and because the Gulf states have the petro-dollars to pay for them. No one is rushing to provide other small states around the world with 21st century military technology. It is true that the UAE has a dispute with Iran over three

small islands in the Gulf. But what is the contingency being planned for here — that Tehran should be bombed to the International Court at The Hague or driven off the islands by a hail of missiles?

The UAE's ability to utilise effectively, in purely military terms, the equipment which it may purchase is in any case very doubtful. Similar doubts surround the whole post-1990 enterprise of Gulf-wide military cooperation through the Gulf Cooperation Council. The UAE's insistence on negotiating a defence treaty with those countries which will supply the arms is significant. Sell us the weapons, runs the subtext, but only if you will come and help us if we ever need to use them. This stipulation is causing problems for Britain, not on grounds of principle, but because it could involve subjecting British troops to UAE law. Whether or not this would include whipping for adulterers is not clear, but it might certainly prove politically embarrassing to say the least.

The British government signed up after the Gulf War for an international effort to reduce the flow of arms to the Middle East. Yet since then the arming of the Gulf has reached saturation point. The argument that "British jobs are at stake" concedes that the policy may be indefensible on other grounds. In fact the economic claim is much less attractive for the nation when the actual terms including soft loans and credit guarantees are taken into account. These financial resources are finite and would be better devoted to promoting British civil exports. At a time of lower oil prices, the Gulf states' funds are not inexhaustible either, yet arms spending is so enormous that it distorts their budgets. The dollars would be better spent on promoting internal reform — and investing elsewhere for Middle East peace.

Politicians who simply lack beef

Yet again ministers opt for Euroscepticism instead of the facts

CONSERVATIVE Eurosceptics believe they can bring their party together and increase its popularity by standing alone on every available European issue. An increasing proportion of their more pragmatic colleagues, epitomised by John Major, agree with them for the sake of party unity. Labour, anxious not to fight a jingo election in which it is cast as uncritically pro-European, follows in the slipstream of Conservative policy, though at a decent distance. In British politics it has now become axiomatic that it is electorally preferable to be isolated on Europe than to agree with the other member states.

This populist approach is inherently opportunist. Last year the Eurosceptics seized on the upsurge of anxiety about live animal exports. They eagerly incorporated it into their manifesto of anti-Brexit demands. Building on the hostility which many in this country rightly feel towards the EU's common agricultural policy, the Eurosceptics tried to harness hostility to European harmonisation with the intense anxieties about the meat industry which crystallised in the anti-live exports campaign. It was their moment of highest influence. Their achievement was even embodied in a special section of the British government's European policy white paper published last week.

But what happens when the same populism collides? Yesterday the British government proudly isolated itself on a European agricultural policy issue once again. This time the item was a

plan to continue an eight year-old ban on the use of meat growth hormones, which effectively bars American, Canadian and Australian beef from European markets. Once again our minister stood up for the British way in opposition to Brussels and to his agriculture minister colleagues. The only trouble was that this time — unlike over live exports — Britain is on the wrong side of the argument as far as public opinion is concerned.

Britain's support for the lifting of the ban is based on the belief, reinforced by a Commission-sponsored conference last year, that there is no scientific evidence of human health risk arising from the use of both natural and synthetic hormones. The Man in Whitehall suspects that the scientific arguments accepted by the other member states are a cover for a protectionist policy to benefit the big and influential European beef producers. The other governments say that European consumers, still suspicious after the panic over mad cow disease, will not buy hormone-treated beef anyway. British consumers undoubtedly agree, to judge by the decline in beef sales here. It says a lot about the Conservatives that they are so out of touch. They prefer to heed the theoretical obsessions of the anti-Europeans than the reality of changing consumption patterns. Millions of voters are disgusted with meat industry production methods. Ministers should speak for them; not for the Tory Party's Little England fanatics.

Meet the new chips on the block

And imagine the joy of watching television without the dross

LAST month President Clinton made it mandatory for all future US television sets to have a "V chip" to block violent or explicit films (as classified by a government panel). Parents will have to key in a password to permit such films to be seen. John Major is coming under pressure to do something similar. However, by the time it is ready, the V chip will have been overtaken by a similar chip designed to let parents and others do their own monitoring rather than falling in with what the bureaucrats decide is safe for us to view.

It may not be long before an alphabet of chips is available to make viewing even more pleasurable than it now is. An A chip would automatically switch channels as soon as any advertisements came on and return when they have finished, a B chip would fizzle the screen whenever Baywatch came on, a C chip would switch off with the mention of Charles and Diana and so on. In

such digital delight, an N would cause the set to throw up when News Bunnies came on, an I would censor inane programmes, D would detect the sound of a dart hitting the board, G would send the Good Sex Guide packing (or at least, dressing) while a CO would kill all Carry On repeats. A television set like this with a mind of its own would cut out when Lloyd Grossman reached a new high pitch or when the Girlie Show reached a new low; would switch on when two politicians agreed with each other but go to sleep faced with wall-to-wall afternoon pap, anyone with the initials "OJ", sponsored weather, sports superfluity, anything containing the word Chipmunks, serials we weren't in at the start for, and Cell Block H (part 1,234). Such a television set would soon win a Bafta award for liberating us to do all the things people used to do before television came along. If only we could remember them.

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Letters to the Editor

Hear no evil, see no evil

IF THERE is one thing worse than the intrusion on private grief since the Dunblane massacre, it is the morose pontification of "evil as a dynamic in human affairs" (Reason eclipsed by evil, March 16).

One of my own sons survived mild molestation by a man in the park 20 years ago and now has no recollection of the incident. I am convinced that this is because, although we talked to him about it, assured him that the molester was wrong to do it, and told him firmly not to chat to strange men in future, no one noticed or overreacted. Children need protection and reassurance, not publicity and paranoia.

The biggest danger in the case of Thomas Hamilton is that his suspected paedophilia will be conflated with his murderous final acts and that this may lead to other misdiagnoses and more witch-hunting of "perverts". We need to be able to distinguish between different kinds of crime rather than to be fed panic about generalised "evil". Name and address supplied.

THE selection of leading thinkers questioned by Henry Forter about evil, idealism or peace, is drawn from a pretty narrow range of the liberal spectrum. What do the Neo-Darwinists think about it all? Can mass murder

and genocide be construed as acts of altruism that maximise the chances of survival of one's own genes by eliminating potential competitors? Are these genes "selfish", or just blindly idiotic? Perhaps Richard Dawkins can help. Jim Buck, 227 Cemetery Road, Sheffield S11 8FQ.

AS a police sergeant I supervise two constables who investigate the suitability of applicants to possess firearms and shotgun permits. They have, in the past, successfully persuaded the senior officer to revoke permits. However, such a decision is always subject to appeal to the Crown Court. Although hearsay evidence is permitted, some judges are reluctant to admit it or place much weight on it. Some witnesses are unwilling to attend court in East Hertfordshire, we have over 3,500 permit-holders (shotguns and firearms). Some of these people give me cause for concern, but on the evidence we have I am in little doubt an appeal against revocation would succeed. We cannot refuse a permit because a person is thought of as "odd" or "weird".

(Prof) Phil Scruton, The Highbury Project, Centre for Studies in Crime and Social Justice, Edge Hill University College, St Helens Road, Lancs L68 4QP.

THE reporting of Dunblane has been appalling. North

ing has been learnt from the intrusiveness, publication of half-truths and downright fabrication which characterises the immediate aftermath of previous disasters.

Beyond the purple prose and hate-writing of the worst excesses (the simplistic, wise-after-the-event commentaries on "tomors" about "evil", about "weirdos"), you expect something better from the "experts".

Without justification or qualification, Paul Barker's piece (Loner in our midst, March 16) ran together Dunblane and the murder of James Bulger. His reference point for the latter was deeply offensive: "... the threadbare realities of life in the urban wastelands of a city which, even now, is conforming to stereotype (dockers on strike, council overs budget)".

Barker doesn't seem to realise that the prolonged dock strike and the council's budget problems are structural manifestations of a long-term decline which has victimised the people of Liverpool. What unites Liverpool and Dunblane is the ease with which ill-conceived media and academic discourses have hijacked their tragedies and their pain.

(Prof) Phil Scruton, The Highbury Project, Centre for Studies in Crime and Social Justice, Edge Hill University College, St Helens Road, Lancs L68 4QP.

How very uncivil

THE Council of Civil Service Unions (CCSU) met urgently with officials with the Cabinet Office in response to the changes outlined in your article "Loyalty" bar limits Irish in Civil Service, March 18).

We were presented with a fait accompli. There has been no consultation with the unions on these changes which will have a heavy weight on the "reserved posts" in the UK Civil Service as from June 1996. At present, "reserved posts" make up 25 per cent of the half-million-strong Civil Service.

This Nationality Rule change has been presented by officials as a technical amendment which brings the UK into line with European Law. An irony indeed for this Government which complains bitterly about European decisions most of the time.

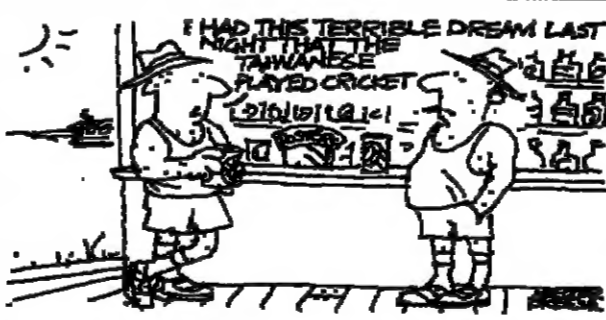
CCSU believes this nationality bar is potentially discriminatory. It legislates against groups of workers who have historically enjoyed the right to apply for jobs in the Civil Service on the same basis as UK citizens. It will send a negative signal to Irish and Commonwealth citizens already in post, as well as those who will be unable to apply for the full range of Civil Service jobs in the future.

The CCSU has registered its protest at these changes and will be pressing the Civil Service to reduce the number of "reserved posts" in departments.

In addition, CCSU will continue to work with its constituent unions to oppose discrimination, on whatever grounds, within the civil and public services.

Frances Kilvington, Assistant Secretary, Council of Civil Service Unions, 231 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1SU.

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It's just not cricket, Australia

AUSTRALIA lost fairly and squarely to Sri Lanka in Lahore (Cricket joy for Sri Lanka, March 18). As a repentant Australian, let me recall how umpire Darrel Hair and the Mark Taylor team humiliated Sri Lanka on Boxing Day at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Hair called seven no balls off three overs of Muthiah Muralitharan's bowling. No umpire called Muralitharan for throwing in Lahore and he took one Aussie wicket. Ought the Australian Cricket Board to examine

its use of Australian umpires in international cricket involving the Australian team? Australia also refused to play on Sri Lanka soil because of the LTTE bombing of the Central Bank in Colombo. To be consistent, Australia should now refuse to play on English soil because the IRA are killing innocent people in London.

(Prof) Shelton A Gunaratne, Mass Communications Department, Moorhead State University, Moorhead MN 56563, USA.

Smoke signal

CAMBRIDGE University's press office has just announced that BAT Industries is to end a professorship in international relations. In addition, there will be supporting appointments and scholarships. BAT is the second-largest cigarette manufacturer in the world and has a virtual monopoly in many developing countries. It would be a great help if all readers who disapprove of this lethal-drug manufacturer trying to buy respectability would make their views known to the university's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir David Williams.

What BAT and the other tobacco transnationals should be doing with their ill-gotten gains is, first, stopping all promotion of tobacco and sponsoring anywhere but especially in developing countries; and second, diversifying out of tobacco as fast as they can. (Dr) Peter Draper, 12 Eastwood Road, Muswell Road, London N10 1NL.

Reds and pinks

CONGRATULATIONS to Paddy Ashdown for guaranteeing to end discrimination against lesbians and gay men (Gay soldier saved Ashdown, March 18).

Although your report covered a number of important matters, such as service in the military, it did not mention two other issues which are, I believe, also part of the Liberal Democrat programme, and which particularly relate to young people.

The first is to create a common age of consent for all young people whether they are heterosexual or gay. The second is to repeal the notorious section 28 of the Local Government Act, which makes it more difficult for young homosexual people to receive the information and support they need within the education system.

It is clear that the Tories do not intend to eliminate such discrimination. But where does New Labour stand? (Dr) Michael Black, Gayton Road, Hampstead, London NW3 1TX.

A pension scheme that will always pay off for Labour

YOU state (Labour welfare changes could save up to £1bn, March 15) that the leadership of the Labour Party believes that occupational pension schemes are inflexible and that an alternative vehicle for second-tier pension provision needs to be developed by insurance companies working together with trades unions and employers.

We are extremely surprised at this especially as, in the March issue of the pensions industry magazine, Pensions World, an article by Chris Smith and John Denham states "Labour is keen to extend the coverage of funded second-tier pensions... This means looking for measures to strengthen existing occupational pension schemes and to see how the small but growing trend to establish industry schemes can be encouraged."

Occupational pension schemes are not inflexible. They have adapted to meet the changing employment patterns and to the demands of new regulations. They take many forms, including industry-wide schemes, and are a far more efficient means of

providing for retirement than individual arrangements run by insurance companies.

These messages need to be got across. For example, your report refers to job mobility and the disadvantages of frozen occupational pensions. There is no such thing as a frozen pension, thanks to a requirement that the pensions of job changers must be preserved and must have their real value maintained up to 5 per cent per annum, well above the current rate of inflation.

NAP would urge the Labour Party to develop policies which would build on the well-proven system of funded occupational pensions. It might start by considering a major simplification of the regulatory system so that employers are further encouraged to provide occupational schemes for their employees.

It is also necessary to simplify the Inland Revenue regulations to encourage more employees to participate. Tom Ross, Chairman, National Assoc. of Pension Funds Ltd., 12-18 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1V 0DH.

That big TV fight: round four

WOULD like to point out to David Elstein (it's a knock-out, March 18) that the BBC has not misled the House of Lords on the issue of sports rights. It is Mr Elstein who is rewriting history.

We have simply questioned the circumstances in which one of last year's major sporting events — The Ryder Cup — was not available to the general audience, in any form, and we believe we have valid support in striving to find ways of preventing a repetition.

The FGA/BSkyB contract speaks clearly and unambiguously for itself: "For the avoidance of doubt, there will be no BBC transmission of the Ryder Cup." As "Not For Sale" signs go, pretty clear. To nobody's surprise, there was no such BBC transmission. Not a surprise, because all of BSkyB's publicity preceding the event made much, as one would expect, of the exclusive nature of their acquisition, requiring those interested in seeing it to be subscribers to Sky Sports.

This was widely understood publicly at the time, including in the press, who seized upon the controversy surrounding the loss to the general viewing audience. For Mr Elstein to claim

now, conveniently well after the event, that BSkyB were simply sitting waiting for an offer from the BBC is frankly absurd. I leave your readers rights. It is Mr Elstein who is rewriting history. We have simply questioned the circumstances in which one of last year's major sporting events — The Ryder Cup — was not available to the general audience, in any form, and we believe we have valid support in striving to find ways of preventing a repetition.

Will Wyatt, Managing Director, BBC Television, Television Centre, Wood Lane, London W12 7RJ.

THE reason I was concerned with others about news access for the Bruno fight is that BSkyB did not accede to it until three days before the fight. David Elstein does not seem to understand that the whole point of a BBC available to all and funded by a universal licence fee is that it has a duty to fight for access to events of national significance on behalf of the nation's viewers.

The campaign to persuade the Lords that highlights should be available for terrestrial channels is not being fought to further corporate BBC self-interest. It is on behalf of the 80 per cent of licence-payers who do not have Sky. Steven Barnett, 21 Stamford Road, London N1 4JP.

A Country Diary

CHEESHIRE: A review of moth records in Cheshire during 1995, by Ian Rutherford, the county recorder, appears in the spring issue of the Lancashire and Cheshire Entomological Society newsletter. Reports during the first five months of the year were far from encouraging, with the prospect of 1995 being another poor year for the county. Spring appearances and counts were low, and in some quarters, usually plentiful species were not seen at all — Pale Brindled Beauty and Twin-spot Quaker being two examples notable by their absence from the author's own trap. Once into and through June the weather improved, as did the records, with reports of large catches and a wide range of species which added over 100 new sightings to the 10km square recording base. However, the improvement did not last into the autumn when catches were again widely noted below the normal average. Amongst the successes during the summer was the addition of three

species to the county list — a Silver Hook was taken on moorland in the north of the county, and the same trap produced Lemphes Gold Spot, a moth whose previous absence had long puzzled the reviewer. The third, found in the extreme west, was an Orache Moth, a species extinct as a resident in the UK for more than a century, and today recorded on extremely rare occasions as an immigrant. The Orache was seen in July and another rare immigrant, a Striped Hawk, was reported in early October, but apart from these two, as the review states, "we saw very little else in the moth line to compare with the invasion by Camberwell Beauty Butterflies and Yellow-winged Dart Dragon flies..." As to the most important record of 1995, this was the discovery of a nest of larvae of the Small Regar, a nationally scarce moth whose serious decline is attributed to pollution and the wholesale destruction of our hedgerows. J.M. THOMPSON

René Clément

A rare compassion

LIKE many significant post-war directors, René Clément, who has died aged 82, outlived his fame. Yet for a dozen or more years — following his great feature debut *La Bataille du Rail* (1946) — he was arguably the most highly regarded of all French directors, not just within France, but internationally and notably in Italy, the US and Britain.

He was the recipient of numerous major awards, including Oscars and Césars, and enjoyed both critical and commercial success, enabling him to work with leading technicians, writers and actors.

At least a handful of his films, including his semi-documentary debut, the miraculously and timely *Les Jeux Interdits* (1952), the sophisticated sex comedy *Knave of Hearts* (1954) the sombre realist drama *Au-delà des Grilles* (1949) and his stylish version of a Patricia Highsmith Ripley novel, *Plain Soleil* (1958) have stood the test of time, if not the fashion. Among his relatively sparse output are worthy of note as intriguing, if flawed, co-productions. It was his gradual move to co-production which enlarged his budgets but led to a diminution of personality and of his social and political concerns. For the last years of his long life he did not direct, effectively ending his career in 1978.

Clément was born in Bordeaux and studied architecture at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, showing an interest in cinema from his late teens, making an animated short as early as 1931. He entered the movie business proper in 1933 when the studio chief, his father, curtailed his studies. He made further short films and became a writer for Jacques Tati, directing him in *Soigne ton Gauche* (1936), which starred the great man as an early manifestation of



Knave of Hearts (1954) ... the sophisticated black comedy, starring Gérard Philippe and Jean Greenwood, was considered his most elegant work

Monsieur Hulot. During the remainder of the decade he travelled widely, made documentaries and short films (among them the political *L'Arable Inconnu* (1937). During 1939 and 1940 he was in the film-making section of the French Army. Later he made several short works, including *Cécile* (1942) and *Chaque de* (1944) until the war's end, when he co-wrote and directed his documentary feature, using mainly non-professional actors.

La Bataille du Rail remains the most important film (among his name, winning him the French resistance. It proved the turning point for Clément, confirming his serious political views, his concern for realism and his obsession with the war. At 32, he received the Best Director award at Cannes where the film also received the Palme d'Or as Best Film.

It ranks with Rossellini's earliest masterpieces *Rome, Open City* and *Paisà*, in its

brutal depiction of the preceding years and if Clément did not eventually rival the great Rossellini for several years he ranked alongside him. It was at this time that Clément, his cameraman Henri Alekan, and co-writer on *Bataille*, Collette Audrey, founded a cine-club which was to develop into I D E C — the powerful French Film School.

In this immediate post-war period Clément worked as technical adviser to Jean Cocteau on *La Belle et la Bête* (1946) and as associate director to Noël-Noël on *Le Fils Traqué* (1946), the story of a mild clerk who is the leader of a local resistance group. Although a minor work, the subject continued to intrigue Clément and he returned to the resistance — with the unusual aspect of a woman as the central figure — in 1952 with *Le Jour et L'Heure* and, famously, with the massive, *Is Paris Burning?* (1955).

In 1947, Clément directed *Les Maudites* set on board a German U-Boat. Again photo-

graphed by Alekan, it started the director's long-term involvement with bilingual productions. It is a *tour de force*, a tense and claustrophobic study of fugitives and men under pressure — with a background of war.

He moved on to a co-production, *Au-Delà des Grilles* (1949), starring Jean Gabin. Set in post-war Genoa, it tells of the love affair between a French sailor and a Genoan woman. For her role, Isa Miranda was voted Best Actress at Cannes and Clément received Best Director, and the movie later received the Oscar for Best Foreign Film. It is a potent blend of stark realism and film noir.

After *Le Château de Verre* (1950) where he experimented with time, Clément directed his most famous film, *Les Jeux Interdits* (1952). Despite comparative unpopularity in France and its rejection by Cannes and the authorities in France, who were disturbed by it, the movie confirmed his international reputation. It

marked a return to location work and tells the story of an orphaned girl who finds temporary refuge — during the second world war — with a peasant family, only to be separated by bureaucracy and the war's end. The film — famous for its haunting guitar music by Yépes — was, for Clément, not about childhood but about the war. It received the Golden Lion at the Venice Festival and the 1953 Oscar, as Best Foreign Film.

After this compassionate work and its concern with ordinary people and victims of war, Clément embarked on his most unlikely project, a Franco-British movie, *Knave of Hearts* (1954). It is a sophisticated black comedy starring his country's greatest romantic actor, Gérard Philippe, who plays a philanderer recounting his past affairs — which have ruined him — to his wife, elegantly played by Valerie Hobson. This witty comedy bears stylish comparison with the more famous *Kind Hearts and Coronets* made five years earlier. Superbly photographed by Oswald Morris and making brilliant use of London locations, it is virtually unknown today and has suffered the indignity of release as *Lovers, Happy Lovers and Lover Boy*.

For his final, solely French production, Clément made his only period film — the fifth screen version of Zola's *L'Assommoir*, set in Montmartre in the 1880s. His obsession with documentary fidelity gives the film a savage intensity, rather let down by the mawkish central performance by Maria Schell — a part which still gained her the Best Actress award and helped make the film a box office success.

After this, Clément worked exclusively on co-productions and less personal projects. However, many critics greatly admire the star-dust *The Sea Wolf* (1958), shot in



A strong sense of political commitment ... French film director, René Clément

Thailand, and the re-issue of *Plain Soleil* (1958) confirmed it as a sunny, yet paradoxically noirish version of a Highsmith novel with the 24-year-old Alain Delon devastating as the sexually ambiguous and murderous hero. By now Clément was working with another great cameraman, Henri Decae, from whom he demanded a "liberated camera". Alongside *Knave of Hearts*, this black comedy remains his most elegant work and the last of his truly successful movies.

His remaining eight features achieved less limited release, with the exception of the massive *Is Paris Burning?*, which he directed from a complicated screenplay by a gaggle of writers, including regular collaborators Aur-

elucence and Best, plus Gore Vidal and Franco Coppola. Again concerned with the resistance, it was — at over three hours — a far cry from his lean and raw debut.

Other later movies included *Le Passager de la Pluie* (1964) *La Maison sous les Arbres* (1971) and his last, a co-production entitled *La Baby-Sitter*, after which he retired from active film-making. In 1984 he received an honorary César Award, a sure sign — like the equivalent honorary Oscar — of high regard and the prospect of inactivity. He was highly regarded by those with long cinema memories. He straddled the period dominated by the old (pre-war) guard and found himself pushed to one side by the new wave and an inability (or

reluctance?) to continue with personal films.

His output of just 16 features is now largely neglected, even by television and the National Film Theatre, where his work as once a mainstay of the repertory. But for those of us who grew to cinema awareness in his heyday, it is impossible to forget his sense of political commitment, a passion for detail and realism and a rare compassion. All unattractive traits today, or perhaps, more of an indictment of the 1990s than Clément.

Brian Saylor
René Clément, film director, born March 18, 1913, died March 17, 1996

Odysseus Elytis

Marvels of nature as a path to truth

ODYSSEUS Elytis, the Greek Nobel prize-winning poet, has died in Athens aged 84. He is the notable generation of Greek poets, writers and artists known collectively as "The generation of the thirties", which included Greece's other Nobel poet, George Sefarakis.

Born Odysseus Alkippoulis in Heraklion, Crete, his family were from Lesbos where his father had set up a soap-manufacturing business. They moved to Athens when Elytis was three. He finished his secondary education in Athens, studying law at the university before abandoning his studies to devote himself to poetry.

An important factor in his poetic development was his meeting and friendship with Andreas Embirikos, the poet and psychiatrist, who was responsible for introducing the Greek public to surrealism. Without ever becoming an orthodox surrealist himself, Elytis was particularly influenced by surrealism's anti-rational character and by the emphasis it placed on the senses. This influence is most evident in his first poems published in the literary magazine *Nea Grammatiki* in 1935, under the pseudonym Odysseus Elytis. This pseudonym was carefully chosen with its associations in Greek with the words for hope, freedom, elite, Hellen, Helen, and possibly also Elytis, another factor in his early poetry.

His first collections, *Orationen* (1938) and *Sun the First* (1943) were stimulated rather than influenced by surrealism, and constitute a lyrical metamorphosis of the Greek landscape, particularly of the Aegean. Poems to love,

and an innocent childlike wonderment at the marvels of a nature that was always in Elytis's work, form a path through the mind but through the senses. In this, Elytis was more a nature philosopher than a nature poet, which perhaps explains his aversion to being characterised, somewhat superficially, as "poet of the Aegean".

The outbreak of the second world war and the subsequent Greek involvement found Elytis fighting on the Albanian front. His experiences of war found their outlet in his long poem *Heroic and Elegiac Song for the Last Second Lieutenant of the Albanian Campaign*, written in 1943, and much later with the publication in 1959 of his epic poem, *The Axion Esti*.

When the Swedish Academy awarded him the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1979, this poem was singled out as "one of 20th-century literature's most concentrated and richly faceted poems". It is a work of incomparable complexity of structure, with perhaps a greater historical and moral awareness than his first poems, yet with no less of the inventive imagery bequeathed to him by Surrealism.

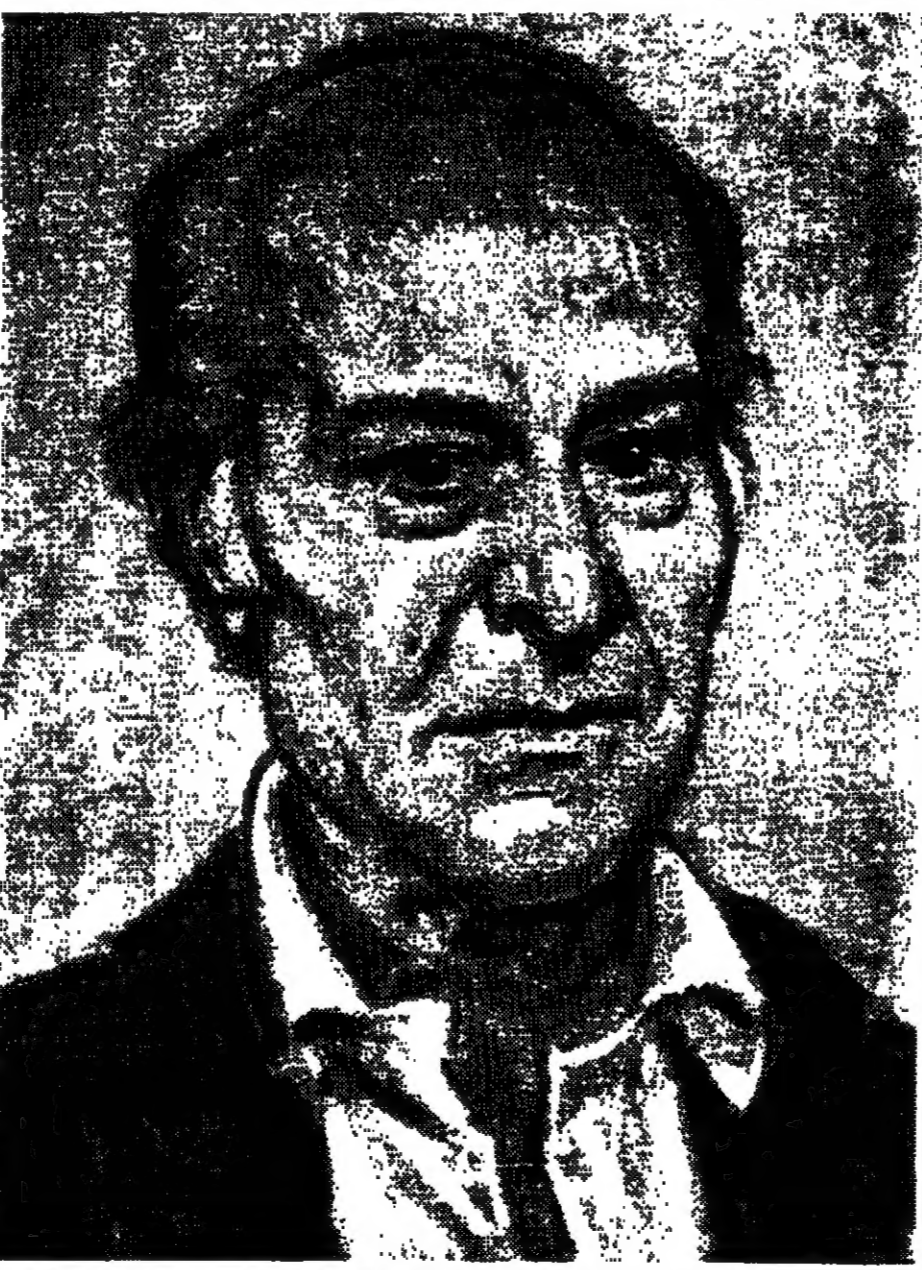
In its three parts, *Genesis, The Passions, and Gloria*, it evokes Greece's heritage and its recent history, and at the same time charts the development of the poet's own sensibility. The poem's popularity was assured when it was set to music by the Greek composer Mikis Theodorakis in the early 1960s. Indeed Elytis's poetry has been well served by popular composers such as Hadjidakis, Maropoulos and Andriopoulou, whose music has conveyed it to all levels of Greek society.

A third period in Elytis's poetry was marked by the publication in 1971 of *The Light Tree and the Fourteenth Season*. The poems in this collection had a prominent place in Elytis's poetry, here acquires a metaphysical dimension and enables Elytis to characterise this and subsequent collections in terms of "a new metaphysics". It is in this collection that Elytis becomes more concerned with the magical, revelatory function of poetry. The poet's mission, according to Elytis, is to effect a new perception of reality, or, as Shelley put it, "to create the world anew". Elytis, perhaps more than any other Greek poet, has shown a remarkable capacity for development in his work, both thematically and technically. He once again started the literary world in Greece with the publication in 1981 at the age of 80 of *The Oxyptera Elegies*, which a number of critics regard as containing some of his finest and most important poems.

Despite long periods of silence, Elytis published 17 collections of poetry and two large volumes of essays on poets, poetry and literary matters. He also translated numerous works by ancient Greek poets, notably Sappho and Crinagoras, and modern European poets including Lorca, Ungaretti, Eliard and Rimbaud among others. Despite falling health, he never ceased writing and in December 1995, he published a collection of poems entitled *West of Sorraia* and a book of prose writings, *The Garden of Self-Delusions*.

Financial independence, thanks to the family business, enabled Elytis to devote himself throughout his life to his literary work. He travelled extensively, living for long periods during the post-war years and the years of the dictatorship in France, where he associated with leading poets and artists of his generation such as Breton, Eluard, Jouve, Char, Ungaretti, Matise, Chagall, Giacometti and Picasso. For the last 30 years, he lived simply in a small two-room apartment in the centre of Athens together with his few cherished books. He was fortunate in having the devoted companionship of Louisa Hlopoulou in his later years, when confined to his apartment where he continued to work and write and where he was to die of heart failure.

In January this year, the Hellenic Foundation for Culture in London celebrated Elytis's work with an evening devoted to his poetry and that of William Blake, whom Ely-



Nobel Prize winner ... Greek poet Elytis in a portrait by Yannis Moralis

his particularly admired. *The Oxyptera Elegies* is shortly to be published in a bilingual edition by Harwood Academic Press.

David Connolly

Edmund Keeley writes: I met Elytis when I was first discovering the pleasures of Modern Greek poetry in 1951, while writing a D Phil dissertation at Oxford and translating his early poetry along with that of Cavafy and Sefarakis. I was much taken by Elytis's joyful evocation of the Aegean world in his free-wheeling verse, and when I began translating it, initially for my own enjoyment, he was helpful in suggesting ways of rendering his sometimes surrealist imagery into English by way of French analogies, his knowledge of English being strictly limited.

I discovered that in those days his vision of the Aegean was sustained almost entirely by his imagination, since he rarely travelled beyond his home in the Kolonaki section of Athens. His

friend, the poet and lyricist, Nikos Gatsos, used to kid him about his lack of enthusiasm for getting his feet on to sandy shores and immersing himself in the blue waters that his poetry so ardently celebrated. Eventually, he regularly spent his summers on the island of Aegina, but in general, he was reticent about travel, and during his one trip to the United States some years after I met him, he found any number of excuses for staying in New York City and receiving visitors in his hotel. The one time I walked the streets of New York in his company, I remember him expressing his alarm at the "underworld effect" of steam rising up through gratings in the pavement.

During a later period, when George Sevidis and I were translating his major work, *The Axion Esti*, Elytis was again very helpful in providing some access to his more obscure images and allusions. I remember his saying at one point, when I pressed him to tell me the botanical identity of some of

the plants and flowers offered in the poem: "How do I know? I'm not a botanist. I chose those plants and flowers for the sound of their names. So when you translate them, you do the same." Elytis had been silent for more than a decade before the publication in 1961 of that long, three-part poem, and he had great faith in its quality despite the initial, rather lukewarm response of some of his literary friends. Time has borne him out: the poem is still regarded as the high point of his poetic career. On the other hand, in his late years he became rather sarcastic about some of his first early verse, calling it "touristic" and he was especially critical of what is perhaps his best known early poem, *The Mad Pomegranate Tree*, which in fact still remains among his most popular celebrations of the light-rich landscape and hedonistic spirit of contemporary Greece.

Odysseus Elytis (Alkippoulis), poet, born November 2, 1911; died March 18, 1996

Dewi Bebb

Modest flyer for the glory of Wales

DEWI BEBB, who has died of cancer at the age of 57, was one of the greatest wing three-quarters produced by Wales but he only took up rugby by accident. He came from north Wales, was a soccer goalkeeper, and his school did not have rugby on its curriculum until Bebb was in the sixth form. But within three years, he was making his debut against England when he scored the only try of the game. Bebb scored six of his 11 tries for Wales against England.

His father, W Ambrose Bebb, was a lecturer who had been closely involved with the nationalist party Plaid Cymru since it began in the 1920s and he had edited its newspaper, *Y Ddraig Goch*. When he retired from rugby, Bebb, too, moved into journalism and presented the Welsh magazine programme *Y Dydd* before becoming news director of ITV.

Bebb was only the third North Wales Schools' player to win his senior cap after Wilfred Wooller and Bledwyn Williams, and when he was chosen to play against England in 1959, he had only made two appearances for his club Swansea.

Bebb was one of the fastest players in the game having run 100 yards in 9.9 seconds, but he played in an era when backs had few chances and when it was rare for an international team to reach double figures. His attitude was that if the ball was not going to come to him, he was going to find it.

The approach served him well, not least in his debut when he picked up a rebound from an England throw-in at a line-out and, in his own words: "I just set off. Before I knew it, I had crossed the line. That was this complete silence for two or three seconds. I could not understand it. Then, suddenly, there was this huge roar from 60,000 people." Wales won 5-0.

The selection of Bebb on the left wing had been the talk of Welsh rugby because of his inexperience. It was a position where Wales had made

nine changes in 11 matches, but Bebb then made 18 consecutive appearances and won 34 caps until his final game against England in 1967 when he marked his departure with another try.

Gareth Edwards remembered Bebb for his humility: "He was a player of exceptional ability but he was a modest man. I cannot remember anyone saying a bad word about him."

Bebb toured with the British and Irish Lions to South Africa in 1962 and to Australia and New Zealand four years later when he finished as the top try scorer with 14. Cardiff City Council had refused him leave of absence to make the 1962 tour but he went and wrote his letter of resignation on his way. On his return, he moved into journalism.

David Plummer

Dewi Iorwerth Ellis Bebb, rugby international and journalist, born August 7, 1938; died March 14, 1996.

Death Notices

OSWALD, Pearl died peacefully on 12th of March 1996 at Kings Cage Hospital after a long illness. Buried at the local cemetery. Pearl will be loved by her husband, her family and many friends.

NEEL, Donald Angus, On 14th 1996 of Dumbarton City Council. He was a member of the Dumbarton City Council and a member of the Dumbarton City Council. He was a member of the Dumbarton City Council and a member of the Dumbarton City Council.

RACE, Eble of Sutton-on-Sea, resigned his position as a member of the Sutton-on-Sea Town Council. He was a member of the Sutton-on-Sea Town Council and a member of the Sutton-on-Sea Town Council.

SOLARI, Frank left us peacefully on the 15th of March at his home. He was a member of the Sutton-on-Sea Town Council and a member of the Sutton-on-Sea Town Council.

To place your announcement between 011 713 4567 Fax 011 713 4523

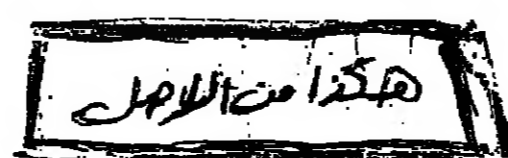
Birthdays

Ursula Andress, actress, 60; Ornette Coleman, jazz saxophonist, 66; Peter Cotes, actor, director, 84; Patrick McGeehan, actor, 68; Paul Marland, Conservative MP, 55; Lord Plant of Highfield, Professor of Politics, Southampton University, 51; Philip Roth, novelist, 63; Brian Rust, discographer, 74; Mary Wimbury, actress, 72.

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Labour will give out to regions

Stokil attor BET chief tentives de



Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

FinanceGuardian

Unelected quangos spend £13bn every year, calculates Prescott

Labour will give clout to regions

Rebecca Smithers
Political Correspondent

LABOUR will this week announce radical plans to decentralise regional economic decision-making away from Whitehall to speed up regeneration in Britain's poorest areas, in the first taste of the contents of a regional policy document due later in the spring.

In speeches to a Manchester conference on Friday, Labour's deputy leader, John Prescott, and shadow home secretary, Jack Straw, will stress the need to link economic regeneration with democratically accountable regional government to create jobs and improve living standards.

They will attack Conservative regional policy, as having been characterised by a shift away from locally elected councillors and into the hands of Whitehall and appointed quangos.

Mr Prescott calculates that around £13 billion every year is spent by unelected bodies on public economic investment, and wants to get economic regeneration under way in the first year of a Labour government by devolving responsibility, initially to economic development agencies set up along the lines of those already operating in Scotland and Wales.

In England and Wales they would be organised to reflect regional boundaries, and would bring public and private partnerships together.

They would be expected eventually to be absorbed into regional chambers of elected councillors — and ultimately regional assemblies.

Mr Prescott will set out the scale of the need for economic regeneration, blaming Conservative policies for leaving Britain with the poorest regions in northern Europe.

A new analysis of the Government's rules for aid to the poorest areas will show that if the criteria in force in the 1960s were applied today, only

two areas would fail to qualify. Ciltmore, Lancashire, and Winchester and Eastleigh, Hampshire are the only parts of Britain enjoying better economic conditions than the qualifying criteria for assisted area status in 1966, when unemployment in the assisted areas averaged 3.8 per cent.

Mr Prescott will tell the conference: "This is a depressing illustration of the extent to which unemployment and economic failure are simply accepted by this government as beyond remedy. Whole areas have been written off."

His commitment will underline one of the little-publicised themes of Labour leader Tony Blair's "power to the people" John Smith memoranda lecture last month, which argued for democratically accountable regional government.

More detailed proposals are expected to be set out in the formal report of Labour's Regional Policy Commission, headed by Bruce Millan, former European commissioner on regional policy.

The document is expected to recommend stronger support for small and medium-sized businesses, and more private sector involvement in public sector projects.

The details of Labour's position come after growing dissatisfaction among Britain's chambers of commerce with regional policy, and their complaints that the rise of appointed bodies and the curbing of local authorities have undermined local accountability and responsibility.

A meeting of the chambers' national council today will formally debate proposals for regional chambers of elected councillors — and ultimately regional assemblies.

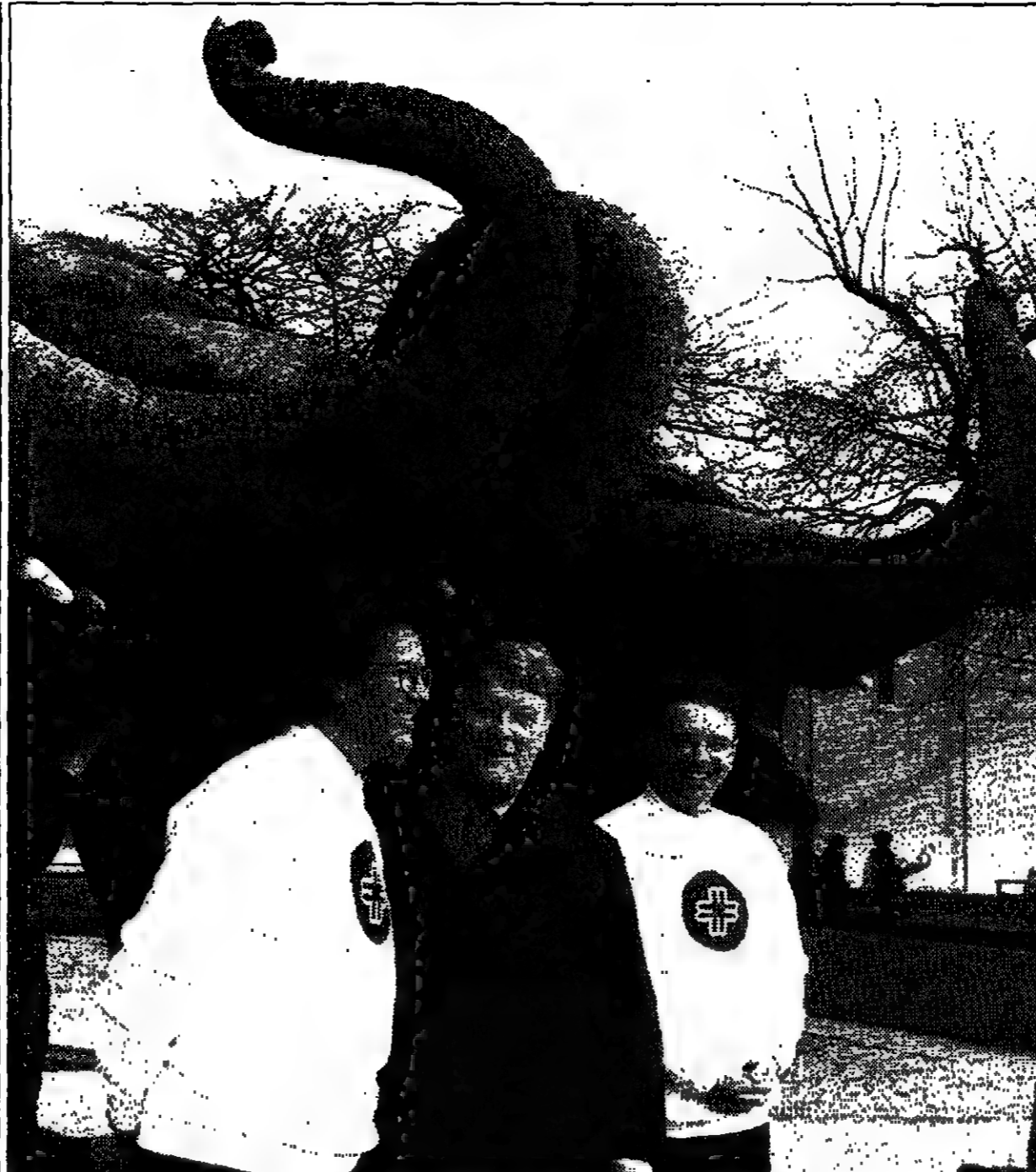
These would be organised along European lines and have representatives nominated by the constituencies of regional chambers of elected councillors in northern Europe.

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scheme and a medium term share incentive scheme. The latter entitles 44 BET executives to incentives worth a total of £9,622,257. According to BET's defence document, senior staff would still pick up incentive packages if the company is taken over.

Rentokil wants clarification on the nature of an "index-related performance target" on which the share deals are apparently based.

BET last night insisted that all details of its top management incentive packages had been made public. But Rentokil chairman, Clive Thompson, is understood to be determined to reduce payouts to departing BET management to the lowest possible figure.



MULTIMEDIA Corporation turned to London Zoo for an image of its financial performance in 1995. The management team of

left to right, director Ed Miller, chairman Duncan Thomas and managing director Claran Doyle reported a profit of

£123,198 — against the previous year's £34,015 loss — after a 51 per cent rise in turnover. The company went public

last July and its latest CD-ROM title, The Wide World of Animals, is launched in Britain on Friday. PHOTOGRAPH BY HAMILTON WEST

Blow for Clarke's tax-cut hopes

Larry Elliott
Economics Editor

CONSERVATIVE plans for a vote-winning giveaway Budget in November were being called into question last night after official figures showed state borrowing on course to top £30 billion this year.

City analysts said the recent slowdown in the economy had left Chancellor Kenneth Clarke with little hope of hitting his £29 billion forecast for the public sector borrowing requirement this year.

They predicted that Mr Clarke — who has twice revised his forecast upwards in the past year — would miss

his target by at least £3 billion. That would leave the PSBR above £30 billion for the fourth year in a row and have knock-on effects for the next financial year, when the size of the Government's projected borrowing would need to borrow £31 billion to cover the gap between its spending and income in 1995/96. That was amended to £23.5 billion last summer and £29 billion in November. Mr Clarke will use any improvement in the

PSBR to justify tax cuts in November, but analysts said last night that a combination of sluggish consumer demand and the expansion of part-time jobs meant this movement was much slower than hoped for.

The Treasury's compilation of forecasts from City and academic economists shows that the consensus for next year is more than £2 billion above Mr Clarke's budget forecast of £22.5 billion.

Yesterday's figures were influenced by the proceeds from privatisations. The second call on the Genco2 power generators offer, sales of electricity debentures and BAA shares meant that the PSBR for the whole year was likely to be £33.5 billion, slightly less than the City expected.

However, excluding state sell-offs, the PSBR last month was £4.4 billion, only slightly down on the comparable £5.1 billion in February 1995.

For the first 11 months of the 1995/96 financial year the PSBR, excluding privatisation, was £25 billion, down from £30.4 billion last year, including privatisations, the total has been reduced from £25.6 billion to £22.2 billion.

Alex Garrard, economist at City firm UBS, said March would see the traditional "scramble" by government departments to exhaust their budgets, adding that the PSBR for the whole year was likely to be £33.5 billion.

Sterling spared from ERM re-entry

John Palmer in Brussels

THE pound will not have to rejoin the European exchange rate mechanism as a prior condition for taking part in the move to a single currency in 1999.

Although the Maastricht treaty still speaks of two years' membership of the ERM as a precondition for joining the single currency, EU governments have, in effect, waived this not only for Britain but also for Finland and Sweden, which want to take part in monetary union.

However, even if Britain does not join, pressure on London to formalise sterling's

links with the ERM after 1999 will increase as a result of a study being finalised by EU finance ministry and central bank officials.

The report, which will be presented to an informal meeting of EU finance ministers in Verona next month, says that even those countries which remain outside the single-currency bloc in 1999 should be required to target their exchange rates more closely on the Euro.

For legal reasons the European Commission is reluctant to acknowledge formally that prior membership of the ERM has been dropped as a condition for admission to single currency in 1999.

Asked about this, the commission said: "It is a matter for [EU] heads of government to interpret the treaty's requirements when the time comes early in 1996 to make the judgment about who qualifies and who does not."

But senior sources within the commission and the key EU monetary committee confirm that formal ERM membership is no longer regarded as a condition, although having a track record on currency stability still is.

"At present sterling is not part of the ERM nor is it bound by the looser, 15 per cent margins, which were agreed after the currency crisis in 1993," a senior commis-

sion official pointed out yesterday. "But if the pound can show its present very limited fluctuation rate against the other EU currencies in 1998, this will count more than whether the pound is in the system itself."

Contrary to the claims of Tory Eurosceptics, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Kenneth Clarke, has insisted that sterling does not have to rejoin the ERM membership for the UK to qualify to join the single currency.

If the ERM condition did apply, the British government would have to join the mechanism this month to keep open its option of participating in monetary union in 1999.

Sega to open £45m 'virtual reality' theme park in London

Nicholas Bannister
Technology Editor

SEGAWORLD, a £45 million theme park offering a cross between traditional rides and glorified computer games, will open in August near Piccadilly Circus in London.

Sega, the Japanese video game company, is using electronics to compress the park into a 110,000 sq ft site. Its aim is to let visitors experience the thrills of the theme park ride and the interactive special effects of computer games while seated in a building at the heart of the capital.

There will be six main rides — Beast in Darkness, Space Mission, Aqua Planet, Ghost Hunt, Mad Bazooka, and ASI-Simulator — with attractions such as motor racing and an electronic version of an American fairground.

All will be packed into part of the Trocadero, the former 19th-century music and dance hall now converted into a shopping and entertainment complex.

Notebook

Why carp about Lord Weinstock?



Edited by Alex Brummer

THE recent bounce in the share price of GEC has been widely attributed to settlement of the Weinstock succession issue, which has been a pre-occupation for the City.

Now that the white smoke has gone up from Stanhope Gate, with the mantle passing to George Simpson de Lucas, there are new complaints. Some City sources argue that the transfer will take too long; others complain that as emeritus chairman Lord Weinstock will not be able to keep his hands out of GEC's affairs and others would like to see a strong, independent chairman in place to succeed Lord Prior before making a formal judgment about the future.

Much of this is, of course, nonsense. In a group like GEC, where large contracts in power and defence are such a crucial part of the business, Weinstock's continuing role is of critical significance as is the group structure as modernised. Moreover, the City would do well to dwell on Weinstock's contribution to Britain's place in global electrical businesses before marking his departure so uncharitably.

In fact it is just as likely that the revival in GEC's share price may have as much to do with its emergence as the likely supplier of an advanced new missile, the British equivalent of the Tomahawk, to the United Arab Emirates, as to management changes.

If the GEC missile deal goes ahead — it could eventually be worth up to \$5 billion to UK arms exporters — it will be one of the most important contracts since the Saudi Arabian oil Yamamah deal. If the hitches can be resolved, the new contract would cascade through the UK defence/electronics industry creating thousands of jobs among dozens of sub-contractors. It would be a useful endorsement for GEC before Lord Weinstock ratchets down his role.

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for 12 months after the announcement of that transaction been in place when the National & Provincial first explored a merger with Nationwide or Alliance & Leicester, it might have been possible to freeze out the Abbey National, which jumped into the race carrying sackfuls of cash bribes to members.

However, the Treasury has still chosen to ignore the heavy lobbying from the building societies. All those two-year rule, under which the only people to qualify for cash payouts would be those who have held accounts for two years prior to the end of the financial year. Instead, it proposes "possible" action to prevent excessive speculation, another feeble response to a financial sector endangered by precisely that.

For the consumer, the new bill would also contain a number of useful protections. Most significantly, all those with building society accounts would qualify as members, not just certain types of accounts. This caused great frustration for disqualified account holders in the the Lloyd's takeover of the Cheltenham & Gloucester and the Halifax/Leeds merger.

Finally, the Government appears ready to halt the conversion juggernaut but its response has been pathetically slow and inadequate.

Taxing timetable

AT the time, last year's Budget was seen as a bit of a damp squib, particularly by Conservative MPs fearful of losing their seats. The feeling at Westminster was that £3 billion of tax cuts were merely an appetiser for the real pre-election giveaway in November 1995.

Several months down the road, the fiscal arithmetic is not looking good for Mr Clarke. The Public Sector Borrowing Requirement for the real pre-election giveaway stands at more than £22.5 billion and the final month of the financial year always sees a spurge of spending by Government departments. It is not a question of whether the PSBR will exceed Mr Clarke's £29 billion budget forecast; it's a question of how much.

The consensus view in the City last night was that the full-year figure for the PSBR will be £33.5 billion, reflecting stunted tax revenues.

Nor is the outlook for the coming year that much rosier. The economy is still only growing sluggishly and if past political cycles are anything to go by the Government's rigorous control of public spending will be relaxed in the run-up to polling day.

The Ernst and Young ITEM forecasting club, which uses a copy of the Treasury's "prodic model", believes that the PSBR will show scant improvement in the coming financial year, leaving Mr Clarke little room for substantial tax cuts. If that is the case, the Chancellor may be inclined to be more aggressive in reducing interest rates. And to look for possible early election dates.

Pearson expansion fails to feed through into profits

Lisa Buckingham

PEARSON, whose interests range from the Financial Times and Penguin Books to Madame Tussaud's and Thames TV, yesterday reported a 23 per cent rise in profits to £365 million — figures flattered by a windfall of £131 million from the sale of its stake in satellite broadcaster BSkyB.

Despite a headline profits record and a 10 per cent increase in the dividend to 16.5p a share, many of Pearson's key businesses suffered substantial set-backs.

Operating profits — before one-off items — dropped by 5 per cent to £266 million, following a poorer performance from a majority of the group's divisions.

Although profits from the information division rose by 24 per cent to £105.3 million,

this was largely because of a full year's contribution from the Spanish group Recoletas. The education operation — largely Addison Wesley — suffered a "bruising" 38 per cent fall to £31.8 million.

Despite a tripling of television profits from Thames TV and Grundy, the entertainment division managed to end the day 14 per cent down to £110.9 million. Mindscape, the hi-tech CD-ROM-based group for which Pearson paid more than £300 million, took a bath and turned in losses of £7 million.

Pearson retains a large stake in the merchant bank Lazard's, which contributed nearly £40 million of profits thanks to the takeover boom on both sides of the Atlantic.

The figures added to doubts about Pearson's talent for acquisitions outside its core area. The company spent £540 million on takeovers last year.

TOURIST RATES — BANK BELLS

Australia 1.92	France 7.45	Italy 2.325	Singapore 2.11
Austria 15.20	Germany 2.1900	Malta 0.5400	South Africa 5.82
Belgium 44.75	Greece 353.00	Netherlands 1.65	Spain 165.50
Canada 2.0250	Hong Kong 11.81	New Zealand 2.20	Sweden 10.17
Cyprus 0.70	India 52.31	Norway 9.56	Switzerland 1.7000
Denmark 8.46	Ireland 0.6500	Portugal 227.00	Turkey 96.791
Finland 6.98	Israel 4.71	Saudi Arabia 5.80	USA 1.4925

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel)

Pauline Springett and Paul Murphy on the Lucas chief named to succeed Weinstock



Still around... outgoing GEC managing director Lord Weinstock is likely to maintain his influence in the company he created

White smoke rises at GEC

GEC ended months of intense speculation yesterday by confirming that George Simpson, chief executive of Lucas Industries, would succeed Lord Weinstock as managing director.

In a typically brief statement, GEC said Mr Simpson would join the company as soon as he was free. Lord Weinstock, head of GEC for 33 years, would then retire from the board to take up an honorary position as "chairman emeritus" so he could provide "the benefit of his long experience and profound knowledge of the company". The handover is likely to be in the autumn.

Newlands and divisional chiefs Peter Gerson and Jim Cronin — were also tipped at one stage, but it has been clear for several months that GEC would have to opt for an external candidate.

Mr Lucas, a Scottish accountant by training, joined Lucas two years ago from British Aerospace. He is respected in the City for negotiating the sale of the car manufacturer Rover to Germany's BMW at a good price.

At Lucas, which produces motor components and aerospace engineering, Mr Simpson is regarded as having a good grip of the business and of having made a promising start of refocusing its strategy. However, his move to GEC comes before the task at Lucas, which is due to report its half-year results today, is expected to find a new chief executive by the time it reports its full-year results in early October.

City analysts reacted cautiously to the appointment. "Simpson is well respected, but yes, we have noted Lord Weinstock's continuing role," said one specialist.

"The market is apathetic. It has been expected for a long time and it will also be a good while before we see any effect."

Industry sources said that GEC would now embark on a fresh succession search — this time for a replacement for the chairman, Lord Prior.

Meanwhile, GEC moved to distance itself from yesterday's report in this newspaper that it was on the brink of securing a multi-billion-pound contract to supply a missile system to the United Arab Emirates.

"We are not saying anything about what we are in the process of selling. We do not say anything until it is actually sold. We are a conservative company," a spokesman said.

However, sources at the defence contractor indicated that any delay in securing a large order from the UAE could be blamed on slowness in forging a planned military treaty between Britain and the Gulf states.

Defence industry observers speculated that any armaments package sold to the UAE would include a long-expected order for Tornado fighter aircraft from British Aerospace as well as the GEC missile system.

Some analysts believe the new boss is almost certain to take another tilt at this elusive prize.

Other observers say BAE may be off the agenda. "If Lord Weinstock had really wanted BAE, he would have got it," said one analyst.

Of more immediate interest will be Mr Simpson's joint venture strategy. GEC already has ventures with Siemens of Germany, Alsthom of France and General Electric of the US. The French and US deals work well but the Siemens link is more problematic.

Siemens and GEC joined forces in the late 1980s to buy Plessey. The spat has been that GEC's independent role in the European telecommunications market is severely restricted.

Mr Simpson, an astute deal-maker, is likely to be keen on fresh joint ventures. That could hasten the restructuring of the company into a fistful of joint venture businesses with foreign partners and, in turn, to demerger.

The City is hoping for a quickening of the pulse at GEC. "It needs to be energised. It's become far too staid and unimaginative in its policies," said one fund manager.

Simpson's hand on cheque book

Outlook

THE succession struggle at GEC is over. Lord Weinstock, after 33 years at the helm of Britain's biggest defence contractor, will be succeeded by George Simpson of Lucas.

Despite GEC's culture of secrecy, the announcement was well flagged. It was clear last weekend that Mr Simpson was heading for GEC, leaving the question of what the appointment would mean for the company — and Lord Weinstock's own continuing role.

Topping the list of tasks for the new managing director will be deciding what, if anything, to do with the company's £2.5 billion cash pile. Lord Weinstock, credited with transforming GEC from a small electrical business into a world leader in defence and engineering, attracted sharp criticism from City analysts who believed the cash should have been put to work.

The critics are hoping Mr Simpson will be their man. As one fund manager with a sizeable holding of GEC stock said yesterday: "I don't see the cash going to GEC shareholders. I did I'd buy bank shares."

The mountain of money cannot simply be spent. One analyst said: "There's not much point in spending the cash for the sake of it. You'd be better off spending it wisely. It's jolly difficult to spend it in the markets in which GEC operates."

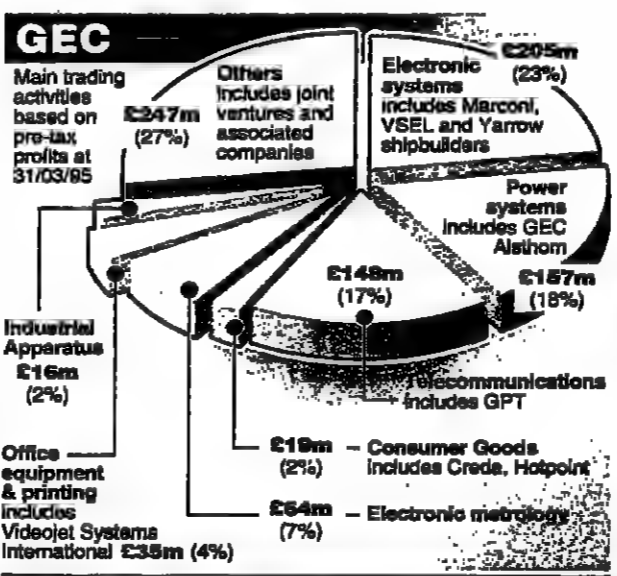
Lord Weinstock's defence

Bill will...

- Allow building societies to broaden activities so long as principal purpose remains provision of residential mortgages funded mainly by savers
- Underline mutual character by limiting societies more accountable to members, including say in whether directors are paid more of society converts to plc
- Extend voting rights to virtually all savers
- Give borrowers broadly some voting rights as savers
- Allow continental banks to buy societies
- Extend jurisdiction of Building Societies Ombudsman and widen powers of Building Societies Commission

Chronology

- 1960 — Arnold Weinstock joins family electronics firm, Radio & Allied Industries
- 1961 — Company acquired by General Electric Company
- 1963 — Weinstock becomes managing director
- 1967 — GEC merges with Associated Electric Industries
- 1968 — Merger with English Electric
- 1968 — Buys Yarrow Shipbuilders
- 1968 — Merges telecoms interests with Plessey in GPT
- 1969 — Sets up joint venture with French power system company Alsthon and GE of the US. Joint takeover of Plessey with Siemens approved by Monopolies Commission
- 1969 — Abandons talks to buy Thorn-EMI defence interests; abortive merger talks with BAE
- 1969 — Buys Ferranti's defence business
- 1968 — Acquires VSEL Trident submarine yard



Predators are warned off building society bids

Jill Papworth on mutuals' defence

BUILDING societies with firm plans to merge may be ring-fenced from hostile bids by banks for up to a year under Government proposals outlined yesterday.

The idea of giving societies a "quiet period" to consult their members without counterbids taking place was contained in a proposed adjunct to the Government's draft bill on the future of building societies announced yesterday.

Treasury minister Angela Knight said building societies who wanted to retain mutual status and merge with other societies felt constrained from announcing such plans for fear of attracting unwelcome predators.

"Where a merger is in the best interests of members, societies should feel able to get on and pursue proposals," Mrs Knight said. "They should not face potential unwelcome disruption from an outside bid while the merger is being processed."

The idea will be subject to a three-month consultation period.

Mrs Knight also proposed that where a society's members reject a takeover bid, the bidder should not be able to mount a repeat bid for a year.

Abbey National, which converted from a building society to a bank and was listed by the Stock Exchange in 1986, said the Government proposal to block hostile takeovers of building societies was the first step towards a fully-fledged takeover code needed by the mutually owned sector. But analysts questioned how far it would actually protect society members.

"If two building societies announced plans for a merger, how are members supposed to know if they're getting a good deal?" asked one analyst. "Under this rule they wouldn't be allowed to know if one of the banks was waiting in the wings with a better deal that they weren't allowed to bring to the table."

Brian Davis, chief executive of the Nationwide society, said the proposal was fine in theory but would not work. It would be difficult to legislate against quoted companies declaring an informal interest in buying a society.

There could be a temptation for large societies to persuade smaller ones to merge with them purely to get a year's protection from predators.

Mr Davis said he preferred a strengthened two-year rule to prevent recently-joined investing members of a society getting payouts in the form of shares if a society demutualises.

At present banks and other quoted predators are able to "buy the votes of short-term investors," Mr Davis said.

He joined the Building Societies Association and others in calling on the Government to redraft the two-year rule. Labour's City spokesman Alistair Darling warned of an urgent need to pass legislation on the statute book.

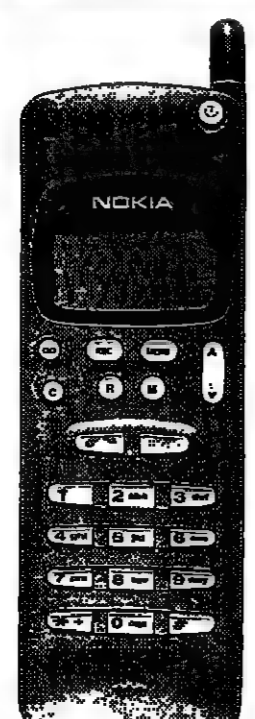
"The Government has taken far too long to publish even a draft bill, which is unlikely to be introduced before the autumn," he said.

"As the next parliamentary session will be cut short by the general election, it is possible that the bill will not get on to the statute book before 1996. That means continued uncertainty, with building societies fighting in a difficult market with one hand tied behind their back."

"The Government must act now to preserve building societies in the future."

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Money-back promotion for Argos shareholders

Argos, the aggressively-headed firm, yesterday handed its £220 million cash pile back to shareholders. Argos, which has ridden out the recession more easily than most of its high-street rivals, said it was paying a 42p-a-share special dividend.

Announcing a 24 per cent surge in full-year pre-tax profits, to £134.4 million, the chief executive, Mike Smith, said the pay-out would not blunt the company's ability to make acquisitions.

Mr Smith, who refused to discuss a possible bid for the H Samuel and Ernest Jones stores, said that it would be hard to keep up the company's momentum of growth.

Argos is pressing ahead with initiatives including a possible expansion of Call & Collect, its new small-scale store, which allows customers to order products for next-day collection. The concept will take Argos to areas where a larger shop would not be viable, with around 600 such stores envisaged if recent pilots prove successful.

Argos is set to continue expansion in the Republic of Ireland, where it already has three stores, and also plans to open a trial store in Holland.

Among other developments are a refurbishment of stores, an increase in the number of lines offered to more than 8,100 by 1998, and an extension of the home delivery service.

Tobacco shares slump after Morris accused

TOBACCO shares took a further pounding yesterday as one of Philip Morris's former leading scientists alleged that the company's nicotine levels in cigarettes in the full knowledge that it was addictive.

The allegations, contained in a 24-page sworn affidavit, came from Ian Uydess, an associate senior scientist who left Philip Morris in 1989 after 11 years because of his growing concern over the health effects of smoking.

Mr Uydess's sworn statement, which was made public yesterday by the federal Food and Drug Administration, alleges that Philip Morris "routinely targeted and adjusted" nicotine levels in cigarettes, based on the "optimum range" preferred by smokers.

He claimed that the company "manipulated" levels of nicotine, first by targeting the amount of nicotine in the tobacco leaf used in cigarettes, and secondly by targeting the amount of "deliverable" nicotine in the smoke.

"Philip Morris routinely investigated the chemical, physical, material and mechanical characteristics of its competitors' products so as to keep itself informed of any changes that might occur in these products," Uydess testified.

Philip Morris, like the rest of the \$45 billion (\$29 billion) industry, denies any manipulation of nicotine in its products.

In response to the leaked affidavit, Philip Morris said: "The leaking of this document... which gave us less than an hour to initially respond, is typically of the anti-smoking industry's tactics to demonize the industry in the press. Historically, when documents are sensationalised in the press and find their way into the courtroom, juries have failed to find them to be evidence of wrongdoing."

Shares in Philip Morris plunged 86¢ to \$89.40 on the news, with other tobacco shares also suffering.

The allegations echo those of Jeffrey Wigand, former research head at Brown & Williamson, an American subsidiary of BAT Industries.

Mr Uydess's statement came just a week after Liggett, the smallest of the five American tobacco companies, broke the industry's long-standing united front when it announced a tentative settlement of a huge federal class action suit in New Orleans on behalf of every addicted smoker in the United States.

BAT's top lawyer, Stuart Chalfen, met analysts and major shareholders in London yesterday to calm fears that the company might be forced to follow Liggett's lead.

Alliance to quit estate agencies

ALLIANCE & Leicester, Britain's fourth biggest building society, is to sell or close its 70 estate agency branches. It has aside £40 million to cover losses if the whole division, employing 462 people, fails to find a buyer.

The society, due to convert to a publicly listed bank next year, announced a 15 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £286 million in 1995. Losses on bad and doubtful debt were reduced to £3 million from £39 million. Gross mortgage advances were up 12 per cent to £2.9 billion — *Jill Papworth*.

Juppe's golden share

ALAIN JUPPE, the French premier, said the state will retain majority ownership France Telecom as it prepares for deregulation of the telecoms market. To head off strikes at the telephone monopoly, employees will keep their civil service status after the partial privatisation. EU rules require France to end the monopoly by 1998. Mr Juppe said a new law would guarantee a continued universal public service. — *AP*

Electric inquiry extends

THE Trade Secretary, Ian Lang, extended the Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry into proposed bids by PowerGen and National Power for two regional electricity companies, Midlands and Southern, by three weeks. — *Reuters*

Japan's surplus falls

JAPAN'S trade surplus fell last month, suggesting its economy may be growing at last. The total surplus fell by almost 46 per cent to \$4 billion in February, that with the US by 30 per cent to \$3.4 billion. Imports rose by 17 per cent, for the 16th month in a row, to \$27.5 billion, while exports fell by 3.3 per cent to \$34.1 billion, the first monthly fall for three years. — *Kevin Rafferty in Tokyo*

Bunzl warns on growth

BUNZL pushed profits up 33 per cent to £106.2 million in 1995, but said weaker economic growth was likely to hit its markets. Anthony Habgood, chief executive of the paper and plastic packaging group, said paper prices were falling as customers cut stocks. — *Tony May*

Glynwed defies slowdown

HIGHER exports and new products helped Glynwed International raise 1995 profits by 25 per cent to £64.2 million. Gareth Davies, chairman of the metals and plastic products group, said the result was achieved despite the UK's slower recovery in the second half, and included a four-month contribution from Vitulic, bought in August, of £4.6 million. — *Tony May*

Future Finance

Money Guardian's Future Finance pull-out, missing on Saturday in some parts of the country, will be published in those areas on March 23.

...vintage about Nations

Racing

Non-vintage look about the National

NO Grand National can be described as dull, but there is a definite lack of quality about the Martell-sponsored chase at Aintree on Saturday week. Rough Chase, the Gold Cup second, has already been ruled out and doubts are growing about the participation of top-weight Jodami and last year's winner Royal Athlete.

top the handicap at Aintree, resulting in a rise in the weights of 5lb, which would be good news for the supporters of Lo Stregone, who has 9st 3lb in the long handicap. Ladbrokes yesterday shortened Lo Stregone from 9-1 to 7-1 favourite. Tom Tate's 10-year-old is 6-1 with Hill's, who then go 8-1 Young Hustler.



Look for the Eros inside of you... Perry poses in Piccadilly Circus

Old Fridge promises fresh goods

WILLIAM PERRY showed off his new shirt yesterday. It is an XXXL in fetching blue, white and gold, a hot-air balloon with "Fridge 95" on the back.

blown tackle a decade past the peak of his fame — but they reckon he can generate some hot air during the coming World League season. They know he can help them sell some tickets, and they hope he can still bounce a few offensive linemen around.

World League. "I can't wait to start," he said. "I've still got a good three or four years left in me and I wanted to do something different."

and it is possible he is still sprightly enough to figure in the Monarchs' offence. "I'm definitely into carrying the ball," he said. "But whatever the coach wants me to do — be it block, defensive tackle or whatever else — that's what I'm gonna do."

ings, the Scottish Claymores' celebrity signing, has also been at work. "I saw Gavin in training," said Perry. "He kicks very well but we'll have to get some pressure on him when he's taking field goals."

Rugby League Sydney rebels sue for peace

STAR NAMES among the Murdoch rebels will play in the ARL season when it starts on Friday, in return for being allowed to take part in Super League international events such as the World Cup Championships against British sides, under a compromise apparently being brokered in Sydney by Maurice Lindsay.

Uttoxeter programme

Table of racing results for Uttoxeter, including race numbers, names, and winners.

Ayr card with guide to recent form

Racing card for Ayr with detailed form guides for various races.

Fontwell runners and riders

Racing results for Fontwell, including race numbers, names, and winners.

Results

Summary of racing results from various tracks, including race numbers and winners.

Fontwell runners and riders

Racing results for Fontwell, including race numbers, names, and winners.

Fontwell runners and riders

Racing results for Fontwell, including race numbers, names, and winners.

Fontwell runners and riders

Racing results for Fontwell, including race numbers, names, and winners.

Fontwell runners and riders

Racing results for Fontwell, including race numbers, names, and winners.

RACELINE advertisement featuring contact information and a list of racing-related services.

Soccer

Gascoigne needs twin controls

Patrick Glenn on Terry Venables's message to his wayward midfielder

PAUL GASCOIGNE still needs, at 28, to learn to control himself temperamental and curb his tendency towards over-exertion...

Red & yellow

Gascoigne's disciplinary record since joining Rangers: Sept 23 v Hibernian: booked (disent)...



Goal delight... but disciplinary despair has dogged much of Paul Gascoigne's first season back in British football

man signed by Rangers for 5.5 million from Lazio last July has not been sent off in Scotland...

Celtic, deep in midfield one moment and then away up front the next. It's a long way back and it takes it out of a player...

weight. We saw that in the Uzbek tournament. He scored some goals for Rangers pre-season and then reality set in...

to the confrontation with Scotland in the European Championship, would like this old rivalry to be a regular feature of the British football calendar again...

PHOTOGRAPH ANDY HEADING

Wright urges Anfield deal

Ian Ross

LIVERPOOL'S refusal to offer their 30-somethings lucrative, long-term contracts may cost them the services of Mark Wright during the summer...

Wright's current contract expires at the end of the season. Unless the defender signs a new deal before the transfer deadline a week on Thursday he will be entitled, as he has reached 32, to leave Anfield in July on a free transfer...

Wright, who is believed to be on the verge of winning an England recall after he, too, had failed to convince his club that he was worthy of a long-term contract...

Roy Evans says that he will come back to me soon for new talks, Wright said. "I would like to have had this sorted out some time ago. I am trying my hardest to earn a new contract. Every game I play now is very important to me."

Another player currently seeking reassurances about his future is the Leeds and Wales midfielder Gary Speed, who is near the top of Everton's wanted list...

Niall Quinn may finally sever his ties with Manchester City before the transfer deadline if Sheffield United can raise \$1 million. He has accepted that he will not figure in Alan Ball's plans next season whether City are relegated or not...

Bryan Little, Aston Villa's former England Under-21 international defender, is joining Bolton on a free transfer.

Uefa Cup quarter-final, second leg: Nottingham Forest v Bayern Munich

Clark prepared for latest war of nerves

Martin Thorpe

ON ONE level the task facing Nottingham Forest tonight sounds temptingly easy. Tonight they will see them through to the semi-finals. But Frank Clark goes into the most important match in almost three years as manager at the City Ground knowing that life in Europe is never that simple for Forest...

high degree of balance and discipline we have shown which has most delighted me about us in Europe," says Clark. "But we know that just one slip will be punished. So sit back and expect another evening of Forest soaking up pressure and looking to pounce on the break. The good news is that regard is the likely return after injury of Bryan Roy, one of the few Forest players capable of creating something out of nothing...

Stuart Pearce now fully match fit, Clark's only selection problem is the suspension of Scot Gemmill in midfield. But in the Wales international David Phillips also possesses a natural and experienced replacement...

With Zickler injured, Klinsmann is almost certain to forge up front alone, leaving Forest to cope with the runners from wide and midfield. But Clark will have done his homework. In denying he had even been approached about the England job he was not being modest when he said the only appointment he was worried about was tonight's...

against Australia has yet to be identified although Brown has consistently touted Aberdeen's Scott Booth. "We are looking for a partnership," said Brown, "and Ferguson will be back alongside whoever we feel is appropriate."

Brown named a large squad to cover possible defections by the captain Gary McAllister and defender Colin Calderwood. McAllister plays for Leeds in the Coca-Cola Cup final on Sunday and Calderwood for Spurs against Manchester United the same day...

there are a few players not in it. It would like to see achieve different things in the coming weeks. "I'd like to see Phil O'Donnell of Celtic get some more games after his recent injury. I want to see Stewart McCrimmon, fit again and John Robertson of Hearts scoring a few goals. They would all be in my thoughts."

Brown firm on Ferguson

Patrick Glenn

DUNCAN FERGUSON, the Everton striker, will be given the chance to resurrect his international career in Scotland's Euro '96 warm-up match against Australia at Hampden Park tomorrow week.

Scotland squad: Gordon (Rangers), Leighton (Hibernian), Walker (Partick Thistle), Brown (Aberdeen), Boyd (Cardiff City), Caldwell (Cardiff), Calderwood (Cardiff), Gascoigne (Leeds), Gemmill (Forest), Hendry (Blackburn), Jackman (Blackburn), Jones (Cardiff), McAllister (Blackburn), McAllister (Blackburn), Mackinlay (Blackburn), MacKenzie (Blackburn), Maxwell (Fulham), Murray (Blackburn), Young (Blackburn).

Ice Hockey

Wasps first to Wembley

Wic Batshelger

THERE IS consolation for Sir John Hall, though Newcastle United are not going to Wembley, the Durham Wasps are. With one weekend of play-off matches left, Durham became the first and so far only team to make certain of a place in the British Championship final at Wembley Arena on March 30-31 with a 5-0 home win over the Newcastle Warriors on Sunday.

Sheffield at home and the Bison must play both games away.

Play-off tensions were much in evidence elsewhere: 18 players were ejected from the weekend's 15 games. Four of them were dismissed from the Slough Jets-Manchester Storm relegation promotion contest, including three from the home side. The three officials were subsequently escorted from the rink by security staff when angry home fans besieged their dressing-room after the game, which Manchester won 7-1.

The condition of Bracknell's Brian Wilkie was improving yesterday in Reading's Royal Berkshire Hospital after he sustained a neck injury when colliding with team-mate Jason Coles during the warm-up for Sunday's home match with Milton Keynes. The game, delayed for 30 minutes while Wilkie was treated on the ice, was won 8-2 by the visitors.

Basketball

League stirs strike threat

ENGLISH players are threatening to strike in response to the Budweiser League's decision to scrap its restrictions on foreign players. The league, concerned that the Bosman ruling would see many of its better players attracted to richer leagues within the European Union, announced yesterday that its two foreigner-per-club rule would be scrapped at the end of the season and that its salary cap would be increased 35 per cent to about £135,000.

Sport in brief

Chess Luke McShane, the 12-year-old Westminster schoolboy, defeated his second Grandmaster when he outplayed the England international Jonathan Levitt in the UK League sponsored by NatWest Bank at Hertford, writes Louisa Wood. McShane, playing No. 3 board for Richmond, won in 42 moves when his checkmate threats forced Levitt to resign and he is now in contention for the UK's youngest international master title. He can achieve it with good performances in the league's final weekends at Newcastle in April and Bolton in May.

Results

Soccer LEAGUE OF IRELAND: Premier Division: Dundalk 0-0, UCD 1-1, Shamrock Rovers 2-0. First Division: Shelbourne 2-0, Bohemians 1-0, Drogheda 1-0, Sligo Rovers 1-0, Wexford 1-0. Football League: Premier Division: Arsenal 1-0, Chelsea 1-0, Everton 1-0, Wimbledon 1-0, Middlesbrough 1-0, Norwich 1-0, QPR 1-0, Southampton 1-0, Tottenham 1-0, Walsley 1-0, West Ham 1-0, Wolves 1-0, Yeovil 1-0. Championship: Derby 1-0, Hull City 1-0, Millwall 1-0, Sheffield Wednesday 1-0, Watford 1-0, West Bromwich Albion 1-0, Wimbledon 1-0, York City 1-0. Division Three: Barnet 1-0, Brentford 1-0, Charlton 1-0, Colchester 1-0, Dagenham & Redbridge 1-0, Exeter City 1-0, Gillingham 1-0, Grimsby 1-0, Hartlepool 1-0, Luton 1-0, Mansfield 1-0, Milton Keynes Dons 1-0, Notts County 1-0, Peterborough 1-0, Shrewsbury 1-0, Stockport 1-0, Torquay 1-0, Walsley 1-0, Wrexham 1-0. Division Four: Ayr United 1-0, Brechin City 1-0, Celtic 1-0, Cowden 1-0, Dunfermline 1-0, Dundee United 1-0, Dumbarton 1-0, East Fife 1-0, Elgin City 1-0, Forfar 1-0, Greenock Morton 1-0, Hamilton Academical 1-0, Inverness Caledonian Thistle 1-0, Keith City 1-0, Livingston 1-0, Montrose 1-0, Peterhead 1-0, Raith Rovers 1-0, Ross County 1-0, St Johnstone 1-0, Stirling Albion 1-0, Strathgordon 1-0, Turriff United 1-0, Dundee 1-0. Division Five: Aberdeen 1-0, Arbroath 1-0, Brechin City 1-0, Buckie Thistle 1-0, Dumbarton 1-0, Forfar 1-0, Fraserburgh 1-0, Greenock Morton 1-0, Hamilton Academical 1-0, Inverness Caledonian Thistle 1-0, Keith City 1-0, Livingston 1-0, Montrose 1-0, Peterhead 1-0, Raith Rovers 1-0, Ross County 1-0, St Johnstone 1-0, Stirling Albion 1-0, Strathgordon 1-0, Turriff United 1-0, Dundee 1-0. Division Six: Arbroath 1-0, Brechin City 1-0, Dundee 1-0, Forfar 1-0, Fraserburgh 1-0, Greenock Morton 1-0, Hamilton Academical 1-0, Inverness Caledonian Thistle 1-0, Keith City 1-0, Livingston 1-0, Montrose 1-0, Peterhead 1-0, Raith Rovers 1-0, Ross County 1-0, St Johnstone 1-0, Stirling Albion 1-0, Strathgordon 1-0, Turriff United 1-0, Dundee 1-0.

Chess

UK LEAGUE (Hertford): Round 7: Bristol 3, Bristol City 2, Brighton 2, Brentford 3, Cardiff City 2, Chelsea 1, Colchester 1, Dagenham & Redbridge 1, Exeter City 1, Gillingham 1, Grimsby 1, Hartlepool 1, Luton 1, Mansfield 1, Milton Keynes Dons 1, Notts County 1, Peterborough 1, Shrewsbury 1, Stockport 1, Torquay 1, Walsley 1, Wrexham 1, York City 1.

Fixtures

(7.30 unless stated) Soccer UEFA CUP: Quarter-final, second leg: Aston Villa v Bayern Munich (7.45) Arsenal v Bayern Munich (7.45) Chelsea v Bayern Munich (7.45) Wimbledon v Bayern Munich (7.45) Dagenham & Redbridge v Bayern Munich (7.45) Bolton v Bayern Munich (7.45) Tottenham v Bayern Munich (7.45) Liverpool v Bayern Munich (7.45) Everton v Bayern Munich (7.45) Manchester United v Bayern Munich (7.45) Leeds United v Bayern Munich (7.45) Blackburn Rovers v Bayern Munich (7.45) Middlesbrough v Bayern Munich (7.45) Derby County v Bayern Munich (7.45) Sheffield Wednesday v Bayern Munich (7.45) Sheffield United v Bayern Munich (7.45) Birmingham City v Bayern Munich (7.45) Bristol City v Bayern Munich (7.45) Bristol Rovers v Bayern Munich (7.45) Cardiff City v Bayern Munich (7.45) Charlton Athletic v Bayern Munich (7.45) Colchester City v Bayern Munich (7.45) Dagenham & Redbridge v Bayern Munich (7.45) Exeter City v Bayern Munich (7.45) Gillingham v Bayern Munich (7.45) Grimsby Town v Bayern Munich (7.45) Hartlepool v Bayern Munich (7.45) Luton v Bayern Munich (7.45) Mansfield v Bayern Munich (7.45) Milton Keynes Dons v Bayern Munich (7.45) Notts County v Bayern Munich (7.45) Peterborough v Bayern Munich (7.45) Shrewsbury v Bayern Munich (7.45) Stockport v Bayern Munich (7.45) Torquay v Bayern Munich (7.45) Walsley v Bayern Munich (7.45) Wrexham v Bayern Munich (7.45) York City v Bayern Munich (7.45). UEFA Intertoto Cup: Round 3: Arsenal v Bayern Munich (7.45) Chelsea v Bayern Munich (7.45) Wimbledon v Bayern Munich (7.45) Dagenham & Redbridge v Bayern Munich (7.45) Bolton v Bayern Munich (7.45) Tottenham v Bayern Munich (7.45) Liverpool v Bayern Munich (7.45) Everton v Bayern Munich (7.45) Manchester United v Bayern Munich (7.45) Leeds United v Bayern Munich (7.45) Blackburn Rovers v Bayern Munich (7.45) Middlesbrough v Bayern Munich (7.45) Derby County v Bayern Munich (7.45) Sheffield Wednesday v Bayern Munich (7.45) Sheffield United v Bayern Munich (7.45) Birmingham City v Bayern Munich (7.45) Bristol City v Bayern Munich (7.45) Bristol Rovers v Bayern Munich (7.45) Cardiff City v Bayern Munich (7.45) Charlton Athletic v Bayern Munich (7.45) Colchester City v Bayern Munich (7.45) Dagenham & Redbridge v Bayern Munich (7.45) Exeter City v Bayern Munich (7.45) Gillingham v Bayern Munich (7.45) Grimsby Town v Bayern Munich (7.45) Hartlepool v Bayern Munich (7.45) Luton v Bayern Munich (7.45) Mansfield v Bayern Munich (7.45) Milton Keynes Dons v Bayern Munich (7.45) Notts County v Bayern Munich (7.45) Peterborough v Bayern Munich (7.45) Shrewsbury v Bayern Munich (7.45) Stockport v Bayern Munich (7.45) Torquay v Bayern Munich (7.45) Walsley v Bayern Munich (7.45) Wrexham v Bayern Munich (7.45) York City v Bayern Munich (7.45).

Teamtalk The Independent News and Reports Service Call 0891 33 77+ Arsenal 06 Ipswich Town 18 Sheffield United 18 Aston Villa 11 Leeds United 03 Sheffield Wed. 14 Birm. City 34 Leicester City 35 Southampton 20 Blackburn 21 Liverpool 04 Stoke City 30 Bolton 36 Man. City 02 Sunderland 27 Brentford 24 Man. United 01 Tottenham Hot. 07 Burnley 31 Middlesbrough 23 West Ham 12 Chelsea 08 Millwall 23 Wimbledon 28 Coventry City 17 Newcastle Utd 16 Wolves 37 Derby County 28 Norwich City 18 Celtic 09 Everton 05 Nottm. Forest 13 Rangers 10 Hudd. Town 32 QPR 25 Sport Guardian



of 100 Wigan ju...

Wright
urges
Anfield
deal

WORLD CUP CRICKET

Mike Selvey looks back at a tournament that, despite its unwieldy nature, occasionally rose to magnificent heights, and rejoices in the antics of an Arab Sultan and a myopic stumper

A movable run feast spiced with passion

IF THIS World Cup has been the biggest money-making exercise in the history of cricket, then it has exacted a price in return. Much of the cricket has been good, some of it excellent and occasionally sensational. And the final was a dream. But to play the scheduled 37 matches, the 12 teams were forced to spend countless hours criss-crossing the subcontinent, waiting in airports in the hope that once a flight might leave on time or closed under armed guard in their hotels.

The members of the International Cricket Council have been meeting informally in Lahore this week to discuss this and future tournaments. They are certain to be in agreement that there has to be a rethink to the format, which demanded an international round of qualifying matches in order to eliminate four teams. The format was not the responsibility of Pileom, the joint organising committee, this time round. Rather it was set by ICC agreement and, for what it is worth, an identical format appeared in the pre-

sentation made by the Test and County Cricket Board in 1993 when it was bidding for this tournament. Already the plans are under way in England for the 1999 competition, with the financial guarantees in place, informal talks with sponsors, and some consideration given to venues. As now, there will be a dozen teams, which will mean that associate members qualifying via the ICC Trophy as happened with Holland, UAE and Kenya. Neither they, nor any other associate members, should be discouraged (Sri Lanka played in the first two competitions as an associate). If it were possible, there is no reason why future competitions should not be expanded.

But all the games have to be meaningful, so avoiding the situation where South Africa, for example, can play five utterly professional matches, only to falter when it mattered. Some might say that is the nature of competition but it should be about excellence as well. Round-robin heading towards a semi-final as happened in Australia and New Zealand last time, were more satisfactory.

It has been hard to avoid the impression out here that the whole competition has been about India and Pakistan, and no one else. The reprimandations from Pakistan's quarter-final defeat in Bangalore rumble on in Karachi and Lahore a week after it happened. The latest suggestion, from the eccentric former fast bowler Sarfaraz Nawaz, advisor on sport to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, is that it came at Imran Khan's behest. Imran and Sarfaraz are not bloodbrothers.

But the counterpoint was seen in Calcutta last Wednesday when there was a riotous reaction to India's defeat. The other day, in Lahore, a group of journalists were approached by an elderly man, who embarked on an unrelenting anti-Indian tirade. "When people are so angry," he said, "they do not know the concept of losing." "Can you then explain," he was asked, "why your own national captain has not yet been able to return to his house for fear of the stones and rotten eggs?"

There has been a third, albeit a more positive, side to all this, however, and by contrast there will be wonderful Sri Lanka, through the sheer vivacity and exuberance of their play, have elevated themselves into the most watchable team in the world and thoroughly deserved their moment of history. Australia, too, war-



On top of the world... Sri Lanka's captain Arjuna Ranatunga has his hands full as he is feted with flowers on arrival at Colombo airport. DEXTER CHIEZ

Highs and lows

Table with columns: MOST RUNS, MOST WICKETS, LEADING WICKETKEEPERS, HIGHEST INDIVIDUAL SCORES, BEST BOWLING, HIGHEST TOTALS, LOWEST TOTALS. Lists player names, runs/wickets, and team/match details.

rowled Rhodes; and some sensational catching. There have been great moments, too, such as that when Steve Waugh, in the semi-final, announced the delivery of the tournament to slide past Lara's outside edge and peg back his off stump.

Personally, however, the two choicest moments were provided by the so-called minnows in South Africa's opening match in Rawalpindi. The United Arab Emirates captain Sultan Zarawani, the man with more yellow Lamborghinis than brains apparently, walked in to bat against Donald wearing not a helmet but a broad-brimmed sun hat. For a class player it would be risky; for a ferret (one who goes in after the rabbits) it was potty. Donald's first ball hit him square between the eyes, which then appeared to

burst. He carried on, though. "He's Arab," said a teammate. But has there been a sporting moment anywhere recently to rival the catch taken by the Kenyan Tariq Iqbal, a tubby, myopic stumper with a bushy beard, to dismiss Lara. For an embarrassing half an hour he had failed to lay a glove on the ball. Suddenly Lara's edged catch lodged itself in his groin and, after moments fumbling, he emerged triumphant with the ball. That catch arguably put the seal on the greatest upset in World Cup history.

Wes Hall, the West Indies manager, has criticised his Board of Control for announcing the game's format. "That he and the coach Andy Roberts were to be replaced. Throughout the subcontinent, and indeed in Australia and in England, the word had gone out that the entire management team had been sacked," said Hall. "I would think the timing of the changes was deplorable."

ICC considers format change

THE International Cricket Council is considering a proposal to drop the quarter- and semi-finals in favour of a round-robin second stage to decide the two finalists at the 1999 World Cup in England.

Although the format is likely to be different, the ICC chairman Clyde Walcott said yesterday that the number of teams competing would remain the same, with the nine Test-playing nations being joined by three associate members via the ICC Trophy. No decision will be taken until the ICC's July meeting in London. "We have appointed a committee with representatives from the ICC and member countries to make recommendations," Walcott said.

Rugby End of 100 years' war as Wigan lunch at RFU

Robert Armstrong CENTURY of disharmony between the two rugby codes was swept away at a stroke when Wigan came to Twickenham as guests of Bath and the Rugby Football Union yesterday. Joe Lyon, Wigan's coach, led a delegation of players and officials which was greeted by the RFU secretary Tony Hallett and then entertained to lunch along with Bath's Jon Hall and Phil de Glanville.

"This is truly an historic occasion," a woman, it is said, "Hallett told the Wigan contingent which included the former union players Scott Quinnell, Va'auga Tuigamala and Martin Offiah. "I am delighted to welcome you here. That we can become good friends. Nobody will be able to say in future that Twickenham didn't enjoy a rugby league team coming here to play rugby union."

Hallett was referring to the fixture between Bath and Wigan which will be played under union rules at Twickenham on May 25. That match will follow an unprecedented meeting under league rules at Maine Road in Manchester on May 8. Hall, Bath's director of rugby, said a top rugby league coach would be engaged by the club this week. The Wigan contingent were given a short tour of Twickenham by Hallett, who has long-term proposals for staging major rugby league and soccer fixtures at the 75,000 all-seater ground. The Bath v Wigan fixtures, which will be known as the Rugby Challenge '96, are expected to generate aggregate revenue of around £1 million.



Code-breakers... Tuigamala and De Glanville check one another out at Twickenham yesterday. FRANK BARFOU

Boxing Botha says Tyson is like RoboCop

FEW men would dare to refer to Mike Tyson as RoboCop but the prospect of earning a lot of money for a few painful minutes in the ring with the World Boxing Council heavyweight champion scrawled the brains of the International Boxing Federation title-holder Frans Botha in Las Vegas yesterday, writes Don Best.

Tyson's expression did not change when the lumbering South African started to talk a good unification fight. Tyson, who looked awesome against Frank Bruno, is to fight the World Boxing Association champion Bruce Seldon on July 13. When, surely, the "Atlantic City Express" hits the buffers Botha will come into a complicated picture - it also features Lennox Lewis and Riddick Bowe, if Lewis beats Michael Moorer in a fight ordered by the IBF.

Hockey Holiday hits Reading hopes

READING, the only club and league down a cup and league double in their season, will face Havant in their final league match of the season without their prolific scorer Paddy Osborn, who will be on holiday. Osborn had planned the holiday for after Reading's final league match, which should have been on Sunday, but England arranged to play India at Milton Keynes that day and the First Division games were put back a week.

Osborn will be back in time for Reading's FA Cup semi-final against Tottenham, the 1995 National League champions, who are endeavouring to reach a fifth successive final. Old Loughtonians, who like Reading have yet to win the cup but are seeking an indoor-outdoor cup double, meet the 1994 champions East Grinstead in the other semi-final.

Golf Goydos gains first and qualifies for Masters

FIVE months ago the life and golf career of Paul Goydos was in crisis. He knew he had to make more than \$33,000 (\$22,000) in the last two events of 1995 to retain his US Tour card and avoid having to go back to a place they all dread - the qualifying school. For a golfer who was averaging no more than \$3,400 per tournament up to that point, it was an extremely tall order.

On Sunday, though, Goydos reflected on those moments in the aftermath of winning the Bay Hill Invitational, plus \$26,000 and a place in the US Masters at Augusta in a month's time. "I knew I had to make the money," he said. "It was that or go back to the Q-school, or perhaps having to go back to the Nike tour, or even having to go back to teaching maths in school."

At the 8th another 25-footer crashed dead centre into the hole when it might have gone 10 feet past had it missed. "It's kind of a silly game isn't it?" said Goydos. "At the 11th I missed a five-footer and at the 12th I holed a 25-footer. What can you make of that?" It was, though, a par at the 15th that was one of the most important facets of his win. "I hit a horrible drive and an abysmal second into a trap and came out to 15 feet. When that par-putt went in it allowed me to play the H2O holes conservatively."

David Davies in Orlando on the former maths teacher who found a winning formula

That was sufficient to win by one from Jeff Maggert who, at the time when Goydos was worrying himself silly last year, was relaxing after reaching one of the game's peaks, playing in the Ryder Cup. "Three 67s," said Goydos, "that's pretty impressive. Three rounds without a bogey, that's tremendous round this course. Hopefully I'll remember what caused it."

Five years ago Goydos, 31, could not have contemplated doing what he did on Sunday. He was struggling so much with his game that he spent most of his time as a supply teacher, earning \$105 a day. "That's not bad money," he said on Sunday. "Better than you get for selling tees and shoes in a pro shop. I'd go to work at 6.30, stop at 4pm and I'd have from 3pm to dark to work on my game."

Goydos played with the benefit of the fates on Sunday. An errant tee shot at the short 2nd got a freak bounce and finished inches from the hole and he holed from off the green at the 5th. Bernhard Langer, with a closing 69, was the leading European on 281 for a share of 13th place. He won \$18,174. Nick Faldo finished with a 73, for 322, a share of 24th place and \$10,550.

Two out of three for Neumann

SWEDEN'S Liselotte Neumann won her second LPGA title in three events when she took the Ping-Welch Championship in Tucson with a fourth-round 68, four under par, for a total of 276.

She beat the American Cathy Johnston-Forbes by one stroke but both women could thank the overnight leader Daruile Ammaccapane, who threw away her

chance when she went from 12 under to seven under in the space of four outward holes. Neumann's seventh LPGA victory earned her \$67,500 (\$42,000). Meanwhile the European Women's Tour has announced a new tournament, the European Open, to be played at Hanbury Manor in Hertfordshire on September 5-8 with a prize fund of £100,000.

Stars desert the Grand National field, page 13
Venables and the Gascoigne factor, page 15

Final verdict on cricket's world cup, page 15
Twickenham welcomes the old enemy, page 15

SportsGuardian

NEWCASTLE GO TOP AGAIN WITH GOAL-DIFFERENCE BONUS



Heading back to the top... Philippe Albert slips the ball into the net at the end of a fine move for Newcastle United's first goal at St James' Park last night. PHOTOGRAPH: RAOUF DODON

Premiership: Newcastle United 3, West Ham United 0

Asprilla makes his points

Ian Ross

NEWCASTLE emphatically converted one of the two games they had in hand on Manchester United to regain the leadership in the title race. There were goals of real quality by Albert, Asprilla and Ferdinand — the latter two scoring in a second half they dominated against 10-man opposition — to ensure that Kevin Keegan's men also returned the top with a better goal difference than their red rivals.

There has never really been a bad time to come up against West Ham, irrespective of manager, irrespective of personnel. They play a certain pre-ordained way, sometimes it is enough to keep them where they are, sometimes it merely hastens them down the road to change of scenery. It would be tempting fate to suggest that things are different now but certainly expectations are more soundly based at Upton Park of late. Usually by mid-March the Hammers' fans are looking over their shoulders. Last night the handful permitted access to Newcastle's gleaming citadel were looking forward to their team having it.

not a major say, then a discreetly whispered word in what is a compelling Premiership race. West Ham's team sheet was a tonic to read. With Luděk Mikloško announced as an injury even as the club bus cut through the fog that shrouded the Tyne, the 35-year-old Les Sealey was pressed into service. Even so, Sealey was a spring chicken alongside his touch-line deputy for the evening, the 46-year-old Peter Shilton. Rumours that football is a young man's game can safely be discounted.

West Ham began the first half as they were to finish it, under pressure and strung out along the perimeter of their penalty area like so many fence posts. Just as against Manchester United a fortnight earlier, Newcastle's menace was pronounced very early on.

Newcastle soon found that some quite delightful football had no reward — hardly a novelty these days — as three times in the opening 15 minutes they pushed West Ham to the very lip of the precipice only to see the visitors step snarling backwards. The man with his finger in the dyke was, of course, Sealey, for nights such as these are made for men such as him. For 20 minutes he stopped everything, denying Ferdinand, Ginola and Lee with the casual air of a club player performing on the local rec.

Nothing lasts for ever, though, and in the 21st minute, at a point when their patience and that of their supporters was under some strain, Newcastle broke through. Having taken delivery of Ferdinand's pass some 20 yards from goal, Asprilla rolled it forwards, so dissecting West Ham's defence and pushing the ball directly into the path of Philippe Albert. Albert is a most proficient finisher and his shot was low and true. For once Sealey had no answer. Gately, commendably, West Ham tried to pretend their spirit was unbroken. The outlook was already bleak but the picture was to darken still more in the 31st minute when, perhaps 30 seconds after he had been cautioned for hauling down Ginola, Steve Potts thundered in the Frenchman from behind, lifting him off the turf.

Newcastle always seemed likely to exploit their numerical advantage but on a surface made treacherous by incessant rain, their football was rather less precise than it had been in the first period.

As West Ham reluctantly began to turn their attentions to damage limitation — prudent under the circumstances — Newcastle punched holes in a depleted, tiring defence. Ferdinand squandered a fine opportunity on 48 minutes but seven minutes later Newcastle were home and dry. Beardsley was the architect, slotting forward a pass which Asprilla carried on before driving a shot up and over the advancing Sealey. The floodgates were ajar and after 65 minutes Ferdinand casually knocked in a third after Ginola's corner had been helped on, firstly by Howey and then by Asprilla.

Newcastle United: Brock, Barton (Watson, 56min), Howey, Albert, Ferdinand, Asprilla. West Ham: Sealey, Lee, Baily, Ginola, Potts, Potts, Potts (Broadbent, 77), Williamson, Hughes, Dowds, Dummetts (Dani, 77), Referee: S. Lodge (Barnsley).

Standing up for rights and anthems



Richard Williams

MAHMOUD ABDUL-RAUF is standing when they play the Star-Spangled Banner before games these days but, although his lips are moving, he is not joining in the words. He is praying.

Last week Abdul-Rauf, a 32-million-a-year guard with the Denver Nuggets, was briefly suspended by the National Basketball Association for refusing to stand alongside his team-mates during the traditional pre-game playing of the anthem. The ensuing row provoked a debate about the propriety of playing patriotic songs at sports events, and whether athletes should be obliged to participate in such ceremonies.

In fact Abdul-Rauf had been ignoring the anthem since the beginning of the season, several months and more than 80 games ago. He either stayed in the locker room or sat on the bench while his colleagues obeyed the NBA's requirement that all players and team officials should "stand and line up in a dignified posture along the sidelines or the foul-line during the playing of the National Anthem".

His team-mates knew of his refusal to conform but nobody else appeared to have noticed until the issue became public at the beginning of last week, after he had told reporters that he considered the American flag to be "a symbol of oppression, of tyranny", adding: "You can't be for God and for oppression."

player, Houston's Hakeem Olajuwon, who accused him of misinterpreting the Koran. "In general the Muslim teaching is to obey and respect," said the man who led the Rockets to the championship in the past two seasons. "To be a good Muslim is to be a good citizen." But A. C. Green of the Phoenix Suns, a devout Christian, had a different view: "I hope he sticks with his conviction. This game is nothing but a job. This is not life. You have to have convictions and principles in life."

EVENTUALLY the NBA and Abdul-Rauf reached a compromise. The player will line up with his colleagues but he will not be thinking the same thoughts. "I'll stand," he explained, "but I'll offer a prayer, my own prayer, for those who are suffering — Muslim, Caucasian, African-American, Asian or whoever is in that position, whoever is experiencing difficulty."

I thought about this as I heard the 3,000 British fans of Frank Bruno jeer the Star-Spangled Banner before the fight in Las Vegas on Saturday night. The Americans weren't used to such treatment. The playing of their anthem before his events — Super Bowl, the Indy 500, the Ryder Cup — is part of the pageantry. Gradually they responded on Saturday night by joining in and effectively drowning the British boos, surely lending moral strength to the fighter.

It's my experience that young countries are most proud of their flags and their anthems. To take an extreme example: when the European football championship begins, we shall see Croatia use the opportunity to establish its nationhood in the eyes of the world. The great age of our own nation means that we have grown out of the simple acceptance of national pride: our response is more complex, more ambiguous, which is in some ways healthy but seems poisoned when we turn it into an insult against the sensibilities of another nation.

Personally, I prefer anthems to be played at the end of a contest, in salute to real achievements, as they are at the Olympic Games, rather than before the start, when they can be seen as a provocation — and one, moreover, that invariably favours the host nation. This isn't a simple matter. But I'm glad the NBA and Abdul-Rauf reached an accommodation last week. And I hope the Britons who jeered another nation's anthem on Saturday will have taken their lesson to heart.

Neville brothers ready to match the Charltons

Cynthia Bateman

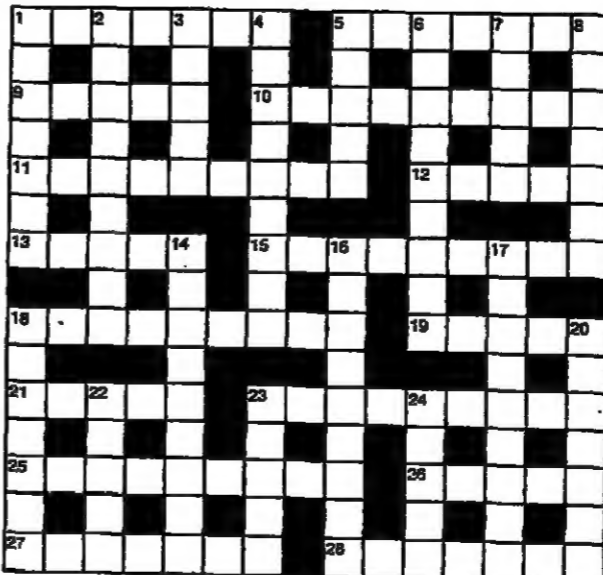
PHILIP NEVILLE, the Manchester United full-back, is expected to join his older brother Gary in the England squad for the game against Bulgaria next week. If the Nevilles make it to the pitch they will join Bobby and Jack Charlton as the only brothers to play together in an officially recognised England game this century. Denis and Leslie Compton, the Middlesex cricketers, were in the England soccer side together four times during the war, but war-time games were not recognised for caps. Both were at Arsenal. Leslie won two caps in 1951. The Charltons played 28 internationals together between 1965 and 1970, including the 1966 World Cup win. Bobby won 108 caps, two fewer than Bobby Moore's 106, both later surpassed by Peter Shilton's 125, while Jack, lately the

Republic of Ireland manager, won 35. "I would think there is a big possibility of Phil Neville playing alongside his brother Gary," said Sir Bobby yesterday. They are both good competitors and very good players. Jack and I were ways proud to play for England together and I know these kids would be equally proud. Gary Neville, 21, has six England caps, winning the first against Japan last summer after only 17 full games in the Premiership. Philip, only just turned 19, has made 16 full league appearances and has recently come into his own, filling the left-back spot when Denis Irwin was forced to move to the right because of injuries to David May and Paul Parker and when his brother moved to the centre. The left-back position has become a problem for the England manager Terry Venables, with Graeme Le Saux

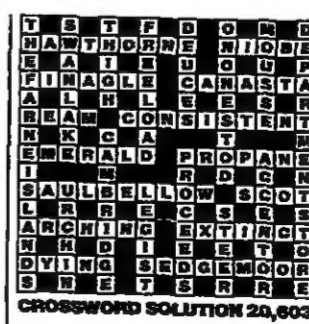
injured and Stuart Pearce just recovering from injury. Until Saturday, when a calf strain kept him out of the United side that drew at Queens Park Rangers, Philip had played 11 successive games in which United reached the semi-finals of the FA Cup and closed on Newcastle in the Premiership. The Bury boys come from a sporting family. Their father is on the commercial staff of Bury FC, their mother is a former athlete and Philip's twin sister Tracy is in England's Under-21 netball team. "Both boys have admirable temperaments," said the United manager Alex Ferguson. "You like to take young players through slowly but the Neville boys have broadened their way into the side and I had no hesitation in promoting them despite their youth and inexperience. Phil has played magnificently recently and it must be a question of 'when' not 'if' he will play with Gary for England."

Guardian Crossword No 20,604

Set by Gordius



- Across**
- Balance story about offspring (7)
 - Model priest becomes course counsellor (7)
 - Bill for Windows (5)
 - Kind of sentence coppers have to face? (5)
 - Shells to be found at the edge of secondary highway? (5)
 - Opponent fails to finish — a washout (5)
 - The Queen's about to have the anaesthetic (5)
 - Street speed is as variable between the same points (9)
 - Trifling with marriage on the first day (9)
 - Bird with head covered (5)
 - Do they sound a false note? (5)
 - One fought mad dog with larist (9)
- Down**
- Member finds Scripture mostly readable (7)
 - Harbottle's reckless commitment (9)
 - Arab leader portrayed as disheartened (5)
 - Cryptic clue one academic used to describe space (9)
 - Preference for early Slesley seen in collection (5)
 - E-mail Copt received from Egyptian ruler (9)
 - Tired ceremonial at theatre opening (5)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,604

- Concerning the conveyance, it's free (7)
 - Failed res. rebuil — with new premium (9)
 - Responsible state includes Socialist and Conservative (9)
 - Statement and description of NHS customer? (9)
 - Raising one's hat to a lady may reveal horns (7)
 - Winter ran up article with any odd material (7)
 - Eastern lung only not very open raised little hope (15)
 - Despite big losses company 'shares retain lustre' (5)
 - 2-digit number, Greek style (5)
- Solution tomorrow**
- Published by Guardian Newspapers Limited at 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3DF, and at 164 Deansgate, Manchester M3 2SE. Printed at West Perry Printers Ltd, 235 West Perry Road, London E14 3NR, Trafalgar Park Printers, Longbridge Road, Manchester M17 1SL. Terence Grenell, Adm. & Circulation, Strasse 1, 6078 Neu-Isenburg, Zöppelshain, Germany Nord Essex, 1531, rue de la Cure, BP68 - 59052 Roubaix, Cedex 1, France. Tel: 011-33 20 41 61 61 61. Fax: 011-33 20 41 61 61 61. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office ISSN 0251-5277. London: London: 020 7776 2332. Telex: 880 8242. Telephone sales: 011-431 8000. Manchester: Tel: 0161-633 7000. Fax: 0161-633 5314/5314 9717. Tel: sales 0161-634 8096

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The lonely hearts columns are full of what Wilfred Owen called the "eternal reciprocity of tears". It is the self-descriptions that give away people's perpetually mistaken idea of what interests or attracts the opposite sex.

Sebastian Faulks

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